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Alice Gordon.

OR,

THE USES OF ORPHANAGE.

BY

Joseph Alden, D.D.,

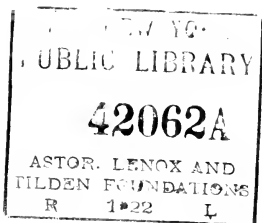
AUTHOR OF "ELIZABETH DENTON," "LAWYER'S DAUGHTER," ETC.



WITH TEN ILLUSTRATIONS.



**New York,
Harper & Brothers**



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ALICE GORDON.

CHAPTER I.

THE DEPARTED ONE.—THE SICK CHAMBER.—
THE GOOD PHYSICIAN.

“FATHER, will you talk to me about my mother to-night ?”

These words were spoken by Alice Gordon in a tone which, once heard, is seldom forgotten.

“Not to-night, my darling,” said Mr. Gordon, in a deep, rich voice, which indicated the man of feeling.

“You are not well,” said Alice, anxiously.

“My daughter knows that I would not fail to comply with her request, except for a good reason,” said Mr. Gordon, supporting his forehead with his hand. Alice felt his pulse : it was quick and throbbing.

"Let me go for Doctor Hall," said she, earnestly.

"No, my dear: it is but a faint turn, which will soon pass away."

Alice brought out his large arm-chair from his sleeping-room, and supported his head with pillows, and, sitting down by his side, held his hand in both of her own.

Mr. Gordon was a little past the meridian of life. He had buried the wife of his youth ten years before. Alice was then five years of age. She still distinctly remembered the beautiful countenance of her mother, and the sad scenes connected with her decease. Mr. Gordon had labored most assiduously to stamp upon his daughter the impress of her mother's character. The lone hours were often employed in calling to mind her virtues, and in sweet anticipations of reunion with her in "the better land."

The motive was by no means a selfish one, when Alice made the request above recorded. She saw her father's desponding coun-

tenance, and she knew that conversation respecting the departed one would comfort him.

When Alice had sat for a few moments in the position above described, she felt her father's hand relax its gentle grasp, and, looking up, she saw that he had fainted. The application of cold water restored him to consciousness. She then assisted him to reach his bed, on which he had no sooner thrown himself than he fainted again. She again attempted to revive him, but it was so long ere any sign of animation appeared, that she began to fear that his spirit had passed away. But the heart, though dull, had continued its throbbings, and he at length awoke to consciousness, to the unutterable relief of the lone watcher. She then arranged his pillows, and left him for a moment, while she ran to the nearest neighbor to apply for aid.

In a moment she was again by the bedside of her father, cooling his temples, which now burned with fever and throbbed with pain. Mrs. James, the neighbor to whom Alice had

made known the situation of her father, hastened to send for a physician, and to secure further assistance. Dr. Hall soon arrived, and examined the patient. To the eager, inquiring looks of Alice his manner gave no encouragement. After prescribing and administering medicines, he remained long, and departed with evident reluctance. Alice followed him to the door. "Do you think," said she, "that he is going to be very sick?"

"He is sick now, my dear friend," was the reply.

"Do you think his life is in danger?"

"I hope not. I can not now decide as to the precise nature of the disease: I will call early in the morning."

Alice, as may well be supposed, returned to the sick-room with an aching heart; but of this she allowed her countenance to give small outward sign. With apparent calmness she smoothed his pillow, and performed the numerous offices discerned by the vigilant eye of affection.

Mr. Gordon felt conscious that the hand of disease was heavy upon him. Indeed, he felt a strong presentiment that his sickness would prove unto death. Unutterable tenderness beamed from his languid eye as he looked upon his only child as she sat, with a faint smile upon her lips, watching his countenance, and a pang of agony shot through his heart as he thought of leaving her alone, without relatives and without pecuniary resources. But the pang was only for a moment. He remembered that there was One who would order the footsteps of his beloved daughter, and guide and guard her far more tenderly and wisely than he could do. With sublime serenity of soul, in view of his (as he believed) approaching dissolution, he rested with entire reliance on that blessed passage of Holy Writ, "Leave your fatherless children with me."

Though watchers were provided by Mrs. James, yet Alice did not leave the bedside, nor close her eyes during the whole night.

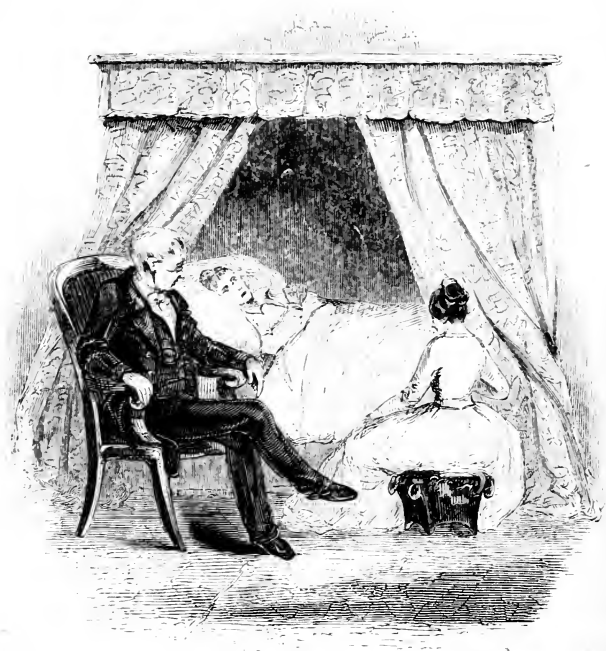
Her father was, for the most part, wakeful, and free from distressing pain. At the earliest dawn the physician came. He could not reprove Alice, though he saw she had watched by the bedside through the long night, nor could he restrain a tear, which welled up from a heart alive to all that was tender and beautiful in human feeling.

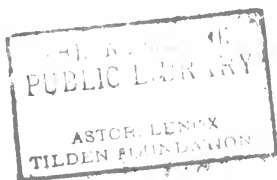
He carefully examined his patient. During the silent consideration which followed, Alice saw nothing in his countenance to give her hope. The watchers had retired. The physician seated himself by the bedside, and for a moment there was an oppressive silence. It was broken by Mr. Gordon. "Doctor," said he, in a faint tone, "I am very ill."

"You are indeed," was the conscientious reply.

"Is he dangerously ill?" said Alice, as calmly as her intense anxiety would allow.

"Neither of you," said the doctor, tenderly, "wish me to deceive you, if I were disposed to do so. You, my dear sir, probably have





few matters of a spiritual or worldly nature that require settlement."

"None," said the father. "I have committed all my interests for eternity into the hands of the great Advocate: I have no debts; I leave Alice"—here his voice was a little fainter—"to the care of the orphan's God."

"You may continue with us," said the doctor, "for several days; but—"

"I may be called at any moment," added the patient, as he saw his hesitation.

"Yes."

No sign of fear or anxiety appeared on the pale countenance of the dying father; nor did Alice, by any loud expressions of grief, disturb the holy quiet of the scene. The good physician prayed with them, and took his leave.

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CHAPTER II.

THE FATHER'S DEATH.—THE ORPHAN'S GRIEF.

—THE FUNERAL.—THE PROPOSITION.

WHEN Mr. Gordon's sickness became known, the sympathies of the whole community were awakened, and the most liberal proffers of assistance made. The members of the church to which he belonged scarcely manifested more interest than did many of the "careless ones," to whom he had often given wise counsel, and administered wholesome reproof. Their solicitude and services were in vain. At the end of three days of patient suffering "his countenance was changed," and Alice was an orphan.

Her grief was not passionate; nor was it too deep for tears. She wept, and her tears, like those shed by Mary of old over her buried brother, did not receive the reproof, but secured the sympathy of the Savior.

The sad preparations for the funeral were

made by friends, whose considerate proceeding showed their full appreciation of her character. She also suffered little from attempts at consolation from those who were incapable of sorrowing.

When the funeral was over, the pastor kindly invited her home ; but she declined the invitation, choosing to abide for the present under the paternal roof, though her parent had left it to return no more. A familiar friend accompanied her. She sat down by that fireside, and gazed upon the vacant place of one whom she would never more behold. She listened, as if to hear that voice to which she might never listen more. For a moment she felt that she was alone in the world ; but she soon remembered Him who had said, " I will never leave thee nor forsake thee," and felt that she was not alone.

" I wonder," said Mr. Isaacs to his neighbor, as they left the grave-yard to return to their homes, " I wonder if Mr. Gordon left any property ?"

"I guess not," said Mr. Wright ; " that is, nothing except his house and garden. I don't think he owed a man a cent in the world."

"He was industrious and prudent, and I don't see why he might not have laid up something. But some persons don't seem to have the faculty of getting beforehand, let them work as hard and be as prudent as they will."

"Mr. Gordon was a very liberal man."

"He gave away too much for his own good, or that of his neighbors. If he had not been so lavish of his gifts, he might have left something for his daughter."

The liberal habits of Mr. Gordon had been a constant source of trouble to Mr. Isaacs. Mr. Isaacs was a member of the same church with Mr. Gordon. Both, therefore, professed to hold their property as stewards of the Lord. Their theories of stewardship differed widely ; at least they differed widely in their practice. Mr. Gordon employed the funds with which he was intrusted in feeding the hungry, in clothing the naked, and in aiding every cause which

he judged had the approbation of the great Proprietor of all things. Mr. Isaacs regarded a steward as synonymous with a keeper, and he accordingly kept with scrupulous care all that was committed to his hands. So faithfully did he act in accordance with this idea of stewardship, that a scoffer once remarked that it was plain that he was keeping his property for the Lord, since he was careful that no part of it should be shared by man.

Mr. Gordon's example was often urged to Mr. Isaacs as worthy of imitation, but the only effect was to cause him to utter solemn predictions of Mr. Gordon's speedy ruin. But his predictions were not verified. Mr. Gordon ever had a supply for the frugal wants of himself and daughter, and something for every worthy object that required relief. At the close of each day he was accustomed to render thanks to God that no object of distress had come before him which he had not had, to some extent, the means of relieving.

"I can not find fault with as industrious.

and honest, and kind a man as Gordon was. His death is a great loss to our neighborhood." This was spoken by Mr. Wright in reply to the remark of Mr. Isaacs, above recorded, that Mr. Gordon had given away too much for his own good and that of his neighbors. Mr. Wright was not a professor of religion.

"I wonder what is to be done with his place?" said Mr. Isaacs. They were now passing it, and Mr. Isaacs had a very clear perception of the fact that the land was contiguous to his own.

"I wonder what is to be done with his daughter?" said Mr. Wright.

"I'm afraid he hasn't left any thing to support her; but she can go into the factory. She might do housework, I suppose, as she has kept house for her father for a year or two, though I rather guess the old man did a good part of the work. He was a good man, but he would have done better if he had kept a little closer to the apostle's rule."

"What is that?"

"If a man provide not for his own, he has denied the faith, and is worse than an infidel."

This passage, it may be remarked, was one that particularly struck the fancy of Mr. Isaacs, and he could quote it with some approach to accuracy, a feat which he was never known to perform in regard to any other text.

"Not many Church members nowadays will be likely to be taken for infidels in consequence of not sticking pretty closely to your rule," said Mr. Wright, a good deal vexed at the heartlessness manifested by the conversation of his neighbor. Mr. Wright was a little warm of temper, as well as warm of heart. "I suppose," continued Mr. Wright, "that the Church will see that the daughter is provided for."

"I don't know," said Mr. Isaacs; "the Church hasn't any funds."

"Some of its members have, though."

"As individuals they are under no more obligations than others."

“Well, the minister said something about being members one of another : I don’t know exactly how it reads ; you do, no doubt ; you study the Bible more than I do, seeing that you are a Church member, and I am not.”

Mr. Isaacs was not desirous of discussing the passage alluded to, or of determining the fact whether he did or did not study the Bible more than Mr. Wright did. Neither topic was to his taste ; so he remarked, “It may be he has saved a little something, but I am afraid not ; he was so lavish.”

“Lavish in giving away, you mean ?”

Mr. Isaacs reluctantly answered, “Yes.”

“I think,” said Mr. Wright, “that Gordon really believed the Bible.”

“Who is there about here that don’t ?”

“A good many in the Church as well as out of it. The Bible says (if I don’t give the text right you can correct me, for it is one of those that you would naturally have a good deal to do with), ‘He that giveth’ to the poor lendeth to the Lord ; and what he giv-

eth he will repay again.' Now I don't find that there are many who believe that ; there are not many that are willing to let any thing go on that security. Gordon always seemed to me to believe it : he always acted as if he believed it. He lent a great deal to the Lord, and now we will see whether it will be paid or not. If I were a Church member, I don't know but that I should think it best to stir round a little, and see that something was done for the daughter, lest the world should say the promise wasn't good."

"I don't think it will be necessary to do any thing on that account," said Mr. Isaacs, not perceiving the irony of Mr. Wright. "I think it would be well to wait a while to see if she hasn't some relations who will take her."

They had now come to a place where the roads leading to their homes parted. Both were glad that they were about to take leave of each other. Mr. Wright felt that his temper was giving way, and that he should abuse

his neighbor if their conversation continued much longer. Mr. Isaacs was made very uncomfortable by Mr. Wright's remarks, though he did not fully comprehend their drift.

"Well, wife and girls," said Mr. Wright, as soon as he entered his house, "what do you say to asking Alice to come and live with us till she can do better?"

The girls' looks expressed their warm approval of the scheme, while Mrs. Wright answered, "We were just speaking about that very thing; we didn't know as you could afford it; we know how hard you have to work. If you think you can do so, we shall be very glad to make the poor girl comfortable."

"Maybe some of you would have to do with less in consequence, and maybe not—can't tell," said Mr. Wright.

"Oh, we will do that!" said Mary; and her sisters, Eliza and Anna, cordially assented.

"Mr. Gordon," said Mr. Wright, "was a

good man ; he was faithful to us all ; he prayed for us ;” here he wiped a tear from his eye with the back of his sun-burnt hand ; “and, if you are all willing, let us give the girl a home.”

The proposition was carried by a unanimous vote. The next question was as to the mode of making it known to Alice.

“I wanted to stop and ask her as I was coming.”

“I wish you had,” interrupted Mrs. Wright.

“But I thought I ought to ask you all first. I knew well enough how it would be with you. I guess I’ll go right back now and see her.”

“Shall one of the girls go with you ?” said Mrs. Wright.

“No, I guess not. I shall want to walk pretty fast.”

Now it was true that Mr. Wright did walk pretty fast, as he always did when acting from the impulse of his warm heart ; but this was not the sole reason why he did not want

his daughter to go with him. He knew that he could not give the invitation without manifesting a good deal of emotion, and, like most men of feeling of his class and habits, he was peculiarly averse to have any witnesses present. Such men are as careful to conceal all indications of generous emotion, as others are to put on the show of it when they feel it not. Hence it is that the laboring classes have seldom credit for the real feeling that exists beneath their rough exterior.

CHAPTER III.

MR. WRIGHT'S VISIT TO THE HOUSE OF MOURNING.—MR. ISAAC'S VISIT TO THE TAVERN.—THE HORNET'S NEST.

MR. WRIGHT knocked at the door of his late neighbor. The door was opened by Alice, who extended her hand, and said, with a smile, "I am glad to see you." Yes, with a smile, on the day of her father's funeral, little as it may have been in keeping with conventional mourning. She was glad to see him; for she had an instinctive perception that the deep want of her nature, sympathy, would be met by his warm and honest heart. He sat down, but not in the corner Mr. Gordon was wont to occupy.

"Your good father has gone home," said he.

An inclination of the head was the reply.

"He would not come back again now if he

could ; but you are alone, and my wife and daughters have been talking it over, and we have all agreed that we should be glad to have you come and make one of us, if you will."

Alice understood the full extent of the kindness of her friends. She knew that they were to be relied upon to perform all that they promised. She was so overcome with a sense of the good providence of God, in thus providing her with a home, that she could only bow her head and conceal the tears of gratitude that flowed in channels which so late were for grief alone.

"I know," continued Mr. Wright, "that it must be hard to leave the house that you were born in, though there is nothing left here to feel for you. (Puss, there, can come with you.) You shall be welcome at our house, and we will all try to make it seem as much like home to you as we can. We are not rich, and our ways are not just such as you have been used to : you may have the offer of a better home."

“No, my dear friend, I may not. I had rather go to your house than to any one in the whole world.”

“Well, then,” said Mr. Wright, greatly pleased with her complimentary remark, “it is all settled.”

“I am afraid of being a burden.”

“Bless your heart, no you won’t. The gain will be all on our side.”

She shook her head.

“Yes it will : you will show my girls how to behave. I love to see girls well behaved (*polite*, Mr. Wright meant) as well as any body. My girls are good girls, and do as well as they know how ; but they have always been at home, and haven’t seen much of the ways of the world. They will take pattern of you, and it will improve them greatly.”

“If I am to become a member of your family, I shall, of course, be allowed to share in their labors, and, when an opportunity offers for me to support myself, you will consent that I shall do so.”

“Yes, yes, daughter, you shall have your own way. We shall be glad to have you come as soon as you feel that you can. The house here can be locked up, and the girls can come down with you to see to things whenever it is necessary.”

It was arranged that she should become an inmate in his house on the morrow.

Sad, but not bitter, thoughts filled the mind of Alice during the first evening of her orphanage. Was it a part of the last prayer of her departing father that grief might press but gently on the sensitive heart of his orphan child? Did the spirit of that father watch by the pillow of that child as she slept as sweetly as if death and sorrow had been known only by the hearing of the ear?

The next morning the pastor called, to render such counsel and assistance as he was able to the daughter of his friend. He heard with joy that she was to become a member of the family of Mr. Wright. There were wealthier families in his congregation, there

were those who had no children ; but there was not one in which she would be so likely to find a home in which her fine elements of character would be allowed so naturally to expand. He blessed God that he had so kindly provided for the orphan. He knew that Mr. Wright's means were limited ; but he resolved that, so far as his influence could prevent it, he should not be a loser by his generosity. In this connection, he remembered with peculiar interest the passage, "Inasmuch as ye have done it to the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me."

Mr. Isaacs denied himself his usual daily visit to the village till he heard that Alice was provided for. Like a cautious, prudent man, he verified the report, which was soon widely spread. He then boldly advanced to the tavern, where a number of citizens were sitting in the long piazza, preferring the shade to bodily exertion in an August sun.

"How do you do, Mr. Isaacs ? we haven't

seen you for ever so long. Have you been sick?"

"No, I have been very busy."

"It was just like him to take her," said another of the group, apparently resuming the conversation, which had been suspended by the approach of Mr. Isaacs, "it was just like him. We should think that he had about enough on his hands before."

"We thought," said one, who was busily employed in shaping with his knife a shingle to suit his fancy, "that, likely enough, you might take her—Alice Gordon, I mean—seeing you have no children: maybe you don't know that Wright has the start of you!"

He attempted to render his remark emphatic by a sly wink, addressed to all who happened to be looking toward him.

"We were talking the other day about what was best to be done, and we concluded that it was best to wait a while, to see what would turn up," said Mr. Isaacs.

"Didn't Gordon make the house and land

over to Wright, to keep her till she was twenty-one?" This was asked by one who possessed peculiar skill in the discovery of sinister motives.

"Not a bit of it," said he of the jack-knife and shingle; "the house didn't belong to him at all. Whether the owner will do any thing for her, can't be told yet. I think I've heard it was to go to somebody or other after Mr. Gordon's death. I guess it won't do her any good. It will be rather hard for Wright to have to keep her for nothing; won't it, Mr. Isaacs?" This was followed by another emphatic wink.

Mr. Isaacs, not being gifted with any very nice powers of perception where money was neither to be made nor saved, replied, "I guess he will get work enough out of her to pay her way."

"I have no doubt you would, Mr. Isaacs; but then, you know, Wright is rather slack, and that's the reason why he is not as before-handed as some of his neighbors. I think,"

said he, throwing away his shingle, and shutting up his knife with a loud snap, "that, seeing neighbor Wright has done the thing up so well, we had better have a subscription for him to start with." And he rose, as though he was about to put his proposition into execution.

Mr. Isaacs was suddenly seized with a desire to go home, to which desire he gave instant indulgence. The glances that were exchanged among the group showed that they well understood the cause of his departure.

"Isaacs," said he of the jack-knife, stooping down and repossessing himself of the shingle, "reminds me of a dog my uncle used to have."

"What sort of a dog was he?" said one.

"A very good dog."

"Pious?"

"You be still, and I'll tell you about it. The dog had a notion of following his master pretty much every where, and he could never make him go home. One day he was mowing—"

“The dog?”

“Yes, if you have a mind to have it so; he was mowing in a large meadow, and the dog kept wallowing about in the grass, and would not go home. Well, one of the men had found a yellow hornet’s nest on a bush in the morning, and he had plugged up the door of it, and cut off the twig on which it hung, intending to take it home and burn the villains, for an old grudge he had against them. He told my uncle he would send the dog home. So he called him, and took a string out of his pocket—”

“The dog’s?”

“Yes, and tied the twig round the dog’s neck, and loosened the plug, and bade the dog go home. He started to take a sweep round, as he was wont to, but pretty soon the plug came out, and the hornets began to play round his ears. Such running and howling I never saw nor heard. He cut for home, and got rid of the hornets on the way. After that, if you wanted the dog to go home, you had only to

take a string out of your pocket, and he would run for home as if all the hornets in creation were after him."

"It's a very good story, but I don't see how it applies to Isaacs."

"Well," throwing away the shingle, and snapping up his knife again, "if you wish to see Isaacs cut a bee line for home, just pull a subscription paper out of your pocket."

CHAPTER IV.

ALICE'S REMOVAL. — HER EDUCATION. — HER
NEW HOME AND HER INFLUENCE THERE.

THE next day after Mr. Wright's invitation was given, Alice removed to his house. She was cordially embraced by the mother and daughters, and told by actions, not by words, to make herself at home.

Alice had been for several years a member of the Church. There was no particular period to which she was accustomed to refer the change in her moral character. From her earliest infancy she had been most carefully instructed in religious truth. After her mother's death, an excellent female relative of her father had supplied the place of her mother till she was fourteen years of age. From that time till her father's death she had taken charge of his domestic matters, with such temporary assistance as was from time to time secured.

She had never attended the village school. Her simple studies had been pursued at home, mostly under her father's care. Plain, good sense, pure and warm feeling, and ardent, steady piety, were the chief points in her father's character. The death of his wife, to whom he was attached with an affection bordering on idolatry, caused him ever after to feel that he was a stranger and pilgrim upon the earth. There was but one tie that bound his heart to the earth, and when he was satisfied, from the tenor of her life, that his Alice was a child of God, he often desired to depart and be at rest; but, though weaned from the world, and ardently desiring the rest of heaven, he was most faithful in the performance of daily duty.

The form of Alice was delicate and graceful, her features regular and transparent, indicating each passing emotion, and almost revealing each passing thought. Her moral and emotive, rather than her intellectual nature, had been developed by the training she

had received prior to her father's death. She had few books beside her Bible. That volume she had studied faithfully, with reference to preparation for a world to come ; and it had exerted a strong influence on her mental as well as moral character. She there learned to love the simple and the natural, the beautiful and the sublime. The influence of the Sacred Volume harmonized with, and gave increase of power, to the influence of external nature. Without reading a word of what poets have written about the beauties of nature, she was accustomed, after the manner of Isaac of old, to walk forth at even tide to meditate, to consider with David the heavens which He had made, and the moon and the stars which He had ordained, to consider the lilies of the field, clothed with beauty by the hand of God, and the sparrow, noticed by His providential care. Hence there was greater freshness of feeling than is often preserved in connection with any system of education.

Alice took part in the employments of the family of which she had become a member. Her influence on the girls was soon apparent, and was just such as had been anticipated and desired by their parents. They were good-tempered, affectionate, and conscientious. There was, therefore, a good basis for the foundation of intimacy and friendship between them and Alice. Their advantages for education, both of mind and manners, had been few : for the purely intellectual and poetical they had but little taste.

They caught something of Alice's refinement of manner and accuracy of expression, and were strengthened in their aspirations for holiness of heart. Still, there was a world of thought and feeling beginning to open rapidly on the vision of Alice, with which they had no concern. We leave Alice pursuing the even tenor of her way, not without some sad hours, and some yearnings for a higher sympathy than could be given by the true hearts around her.

CHAPTER V.

MRS. BURTON'S PARLOR.—AN AMIABLE DISCUSSION.—ADVERSE RESULTS.

A SMALL circle was collected in Mrs. Burton's parlor. Mrs. Burton's, it may be called, though Mrs. Burton was seldom seen within its walls. The exclusive oversight and performance of all the domestic concerns, which were considerably relinquished to her by her two daughters, required her constant presence in other apartments, in a garb not suited to the Brussels carpet, mahogany chairs, and marble pier table, which encumbered a room whose architectural proportions would by no means please a fastidious architect.

Mr. Burton, by dint of great rascality, had risen from extreme poverty to moderate wealth. He now no longer indulged himself in acts of open dishonesty. He loaned mon-

ey, bought up mortgages, cheated widows and orphans secretly, and persuaded himself that he had reformed, and desired to be regarded as an honorable man. As he never soiled his hands, whatever he might do with his conscience, he had (in the minds of not a few) one of the prominent qualities of a gentleman. His two daughters, now just passing into womanhood, had been sent to an expensive boarding-school one quarter each, and were, of course, highly accomplished. His parlor had been furnished, as above described, by the sudden foreclosure of a mortgage, and the ruin of a man in a legal way. The said parlor was lighted up every evening; and smiles, cakes, wine, &c., bestowed on such as ventured to tread on so rich a carpet, and meet the glances of such accomplished girls.

The said girls, Julia and Clarissa, were the self-constituted patterns of gentility and arbiters of fashion. In the latter point, so far as dress was concerned, they certainly had great claims to the possession of originality, if not

of taste. They regarded themselves, also, as a sort of opposition line to the pastor and the Church, who were, in their opinion, too strict in their notions with regard to the innocent pleasures of fashionable life, a phrase certainly their own—if not by origination, by repetition. It was a wish often expressed between themselves, that some other religion would be started in the village: they were prepared to patronize it, provided it were genteel.

A small circle, I have said, were collected in Mrs. Burton's parlor. It was not a formal party; neither was it altogether accidental. Without describing the machinery that wrought the result, viz., the gathering of four ladies and two gentlemen in Mrs. Burton's parlor, I would state that it was set in motion by a desire to forestall the society of Mr. Newall, a young gentleman who had lately come into the place for the purpose of reading law. He was introduced by Mr. Weathersby, an inhabitant of the same law office,

who was led frequently to visit the Misses Burton, in consequence of his strong approbation of the composition of the wine there furnished. He solemnly affirmed that it was almost as good as whiskey.

After the weather had been duly discussed, and several emphatic pauses had been made, Mr. Weathersby set the ball in motion by asking, "Who was that young lady in black, who sat in Mr. Wright's pew?"

"It was Miss Gordon," said Miss Green.

"Oh, I had forgotten she was in mourning. But why does she sit in Mr. Wright's pew? I saw she sat there all day."

"Poor thing, how tired she must have been," said Juila, very pleasantly. Julia was partial to the opinion that she was somewhat of a wit.

"I meant in the forenoon and afternoon," said Mr. Weathersby, with some legal dignity.

"Mr. Wright has adopted her," said Miss Green. Miss Green was a very good-nat-

ured girl, and was anxious to cause every thing like ill feeling to disappear.

“Adopted her! has he? Why, he had three girls before.”

“Such as they were,” said Miss Clarissa. This was the first time she had found an opportunity to make a remark. The words were uttered trippingly, and in what she considered her finest tone. She succeeded thereby in attracting Mr. Newall’s attention.

“Is Mr. Wright a relative of Miss Gordon?” said Weathersby. “What led him to adopt her?”

“I suspect,” said Miss Clarissa, “that he wished to have a teacher for his daughters.”

“But Alice has never been away to school,” said Miss Sharpe, who had just returned from the city, where she had attended a notorious school. She had boarded with a tailor, formerly a country acquaintance of Mr. Sharpe, and attended as a day scholar. The particulars of this admirable stroke of finance were not explained; but that fact of attendance on the celebrated school was duly stated.

“It don’t require much learning,” said Miss Clarissa, to Miss Sharpe’s remark, “to teach some folks, you know. Alice, you know, sets herself up to be genteel, and the Wrights think she is, and that their girls will take after her. She will improve their appearance, for she can make the most show of a little of any person I ever saw.”

It was Miss Burton’s object, in putting forth this theory of adoption, to guard against any undue influence which might be exerted on Mr. Newall’s mind by the fine form and fairer countenance of Alice Gordon.

“Do you think it will prove an everlasting adoption?” said Julia, speaking to no one in particular.

“Miss Gordon will get married some day,” said Weathersby, not perceiving the imprudence of the remark.

To this monstrous assertion Miss Clarissa replied by a faint shudder, which indicated that fearful evil would befall some individual in particular, or society in general, if that event should ever happen to take place.

Now the effect of Miss Burton's words and actions, with reference to Miss Gordon, were directly the reverse of what she intended it should be. It fixed Mr. Newall's attention upon Miss Gordon. Some peculiar excellence, he concluded, must attach to her person or character to make her the object of so much attention to the Misses Burton.

Another effect was to render him reserved toward the Misses Burton, and to bestow his conversation on Miss Green and another lady, who seemed surprised and pained at the remarks made respecting Alice.

The attempts of the Misses Burton to engage his attention were avoided with cold civility. Even the familiarity manifested by them with the names of Scott and Byron did not awaken his admiration sufficiently to detach him from a commonplace conversation with Miss Green, whose good nature and freedom from pretence commanded his respect.

The evening proved a very unsatisfactory one to the Misses Burton. Though the astral

lamp burned almost to the very last, and the Abigail, who handed round the cake and wine, did not make an audible reply to Clarissa's stately objurgation for some deficiency, yet the results were not at all satisfactory. No chains were thrown around the new law student. He was in a less favorable position, with respect to them, than before.

They, indeed, came to the consoling conclusion that he was neither genteel nor intellectual; but then they deemed it unwise to publish this conclusion, because he had uncommonly white hands, and, if the newspapers were to be credited, had just graduated with the highest honors of one of the first colleges in our land.

CHAPTER VI.

A FARM-YARD SCENE.—ITS EFFECT ON MR.
NEWALL.

A SHORT time after the evening whose important events are chronicled above, Newall, whose walks were solitary, turned his steps in the direction of Mr. Wright's abode. It was near sunset as he drew near, and the cows—those useful, if not poetical animals—had come to the farm-yard to yield their tribute for the protection and attention they received. They were somewhat in advance of Mr. Wright and his hired man, who had released them from their pasture, and were detained for a little season. The girls, taking advantage of their detention, brought out the pails to collect the tribute. This they were accustomed to do when opportunity offered, with

the laudable purpose of relieving their father, who was wearied with the toils of the day.

"What is going on, Alice?" said Mr. Wright, coming up; "what right have you here?"

"A daughter's right," said Alice, with a smile that warmed Mr. Wright's heart more than a bank-note would have done.

"I sha'n't allow you to do this," said he, taking away her pail.

"I thought you were too good a father to show such partiality," said she, in a mock complaining voice.

"What partiality?"

"You will not allow me to do what you allow to your other girls."

"I don't let them do it. I thought I would take you in hand first as the worst of them."

"Yes, she is," said Anna, who was milking with great energy; "she saw the cows come alone, and proposed it."

"Jones," said Mr. Wright, seating himself on the stool which he had taken away from Alice, "drive the girls into the house." This

was a feat which Jones, a pleasant and worthy young man in the service of Mr. Wright, was well pleased to perform. The girls did not wait for extreme measures, but betook themselves to flight, well knowing that, if they were overtaken, their own limbs would not be put in further requisition for the distance between the point of capture and the house. Jones, having cleared the yard of the three girls, came where Alice was standing beside Mr. Wright, as he was filling his pail, beguiling him of his weariness by the tones of her silver voice, which fell like music on his ear.

“What is to be done with this one?” said Jones.

“I can manage her yet a while,” said Wright.

This scene was witnessed by Newall, as he stood in the highway, concealed from view by the foliage of a willow. It was to him a most interesting and beautiful scene. Highly educated, and accustomed to the refinements of the city, he saw in the scene nothing of

coarseness or vulgarity. He judged aright as to the motives of the girls, and it raised them in his estimation. He had a full view of the form and countenance of Alice, and he distinctly heard her voice. Plainly arrayed as she was, her form appeared far more perfect than the last edition of the human shape which he had witnessed in the city, and her countenance far more beautiful than those that shone in the crowded circles of fashion. On his way to his office, he instituted a formal comparison between the beauty of the farmyard and the belle of the last saloon he had visited previous to his departure from the city. The decision was in favor of the former.*

A desire to become acquainted with the family of Mr. Wright was distinctly felt. Some speculations as to the appropriate means of gratifying that desire were brought to an end by the recollection of the fact that he had come to this retired spot in order to give exclusive attention to the study of the law. It

* See Frontispiece.

would be manifestly a lack of wisdom to form acquaintances who, however pleasant, would deprive him of a portion of his time, all of which was wanted for ministering at the altar of ambition.

CHAPTER VII.

THE PASTOR'S VISIT.—A POPULAR ERROR.—THE
APPEAL.

ONE evening Mr. Beals, the pastor of the village church, left his study for the purpose of making a short visit at Mr. Wright's. It was a few weeks after Alice had become a member of the family. As Mr. Beals drew near the house, he saw, through the open windows, Mr. and Mrs. Wright and the four girls seated at the table, taking an early tea. They appeared very cheerful and happy. The pastor's heart rejoiced at the scene, and he called to mind the passage of Holy Writ, "God setteth the solitary in families." A sudden thought brought a shadow over his countenance; but it was removed by the cordial pleasure with which his entrance was hailed by the happy family. He was always received without ceremony, but not without respect.

His calls were frequent, not only because of his deep solicitude for the spiritual interest, but because of the home feeling he experienced there, the result of his confidence in the attachment of their warm and unsophisticated hearts.

Mr. Beals seated himself at the table, and joined in the conversation. This he was accustomed to do in all his visits. He had no professional topics formally to introduce. He joined in the conversation, if any was going on, and skillfully gave it a direction promising utility. He was an accurate observer, and he had not sat at that table long before he saw that Alice was indeed regarded as a daughter and a sister. There was no distinction visible, except an undesigned and unconscious deference for Alice on the part of all.

Soon after tea the girls reluctantly bade the pastor good evening, a previous engagement calling them away. Mr. Beals was not sorry to be left alone with the parents.

"I hope and trust you will be rewarded for your kindness to the orphan," said he to Mr. Wright.

"I have no doubt but that we shall; indeed, we are already. I knew she would make us happier. I suppose it was that that made me take her. We are selfish creatures."

Now it was not that which made Mr. Wright give the orphan a home, but pure sympathy for her lone condition, heightened by his regard for her deceased father.

"I do not believe your motives were selfish at all in this matter," said Mr. Beals.

"Don't you?" said Mr. Wright, in some surprise. "You don't think I am a Christian?"

"I should be very glad to have reason to think so, but, as you have never yourself professed to be one, I have never regarded you as one. But, if you are not a Christian, it does not follow that all your actions are the result of selfishness."

"That is according to the doctrine taught us from the pulpit."

"Not from my pulpit."

"I don't remember to have heard you say any thing about it in particular, but I thought every body believed it, that is, those that hold closely to the Bible."

"There are some that believe that all sin consists in selfishness, but I do not."

"Don't you? I thought every minister did."

"I believe that all selfishness is sin, and that a great deal of sin is the result of selfishness, or consists in selfishness, but not all sin."

"You don't believe, then, that every act of an unconverted man is necessarily selfish?"

"I do not."

"Can an unconverted man do any thing that is good?"

"He may perform acts in themselves right, such as acts of honesty and kindness. I believe there are unconverted men who are honest from principle, and kind from the

promptings of sympathy ; at the same time, their acts are not acceptable to God ; can not be received as acts of service, while the performer is in a state of alienation from God, or in a state of rebellion."

"Won't you explain a little more?"

"Well, suppose the people of one part of the country rebel against the government, and utterly cast off its authority. While they are in this attitude toward the government, they, for various reasons, conform to some of the laws. This is well in itself, but can not be called obedience to the government. They can not claim the rewards of obedience for acts which have the form of obedience, but were done without regard to the government. The unconverted man may do many things in themselves right, but they are done without regard to the authority of God, at least, they are not done out of love to him, and with a cordial desire to please him. They are performed without regard to him."

"I see ; that makes it clear. I wish it had

been set in that light before." Mr. Wright seeming to be disposed to reflect on what had been said, Mr. Beals addressed his conversation to Mrs. Wright.

After some time Mr. Wright asked,

"Don't you believe in total depravity?"

"I believe in the entire alienation and enmity of the natural heart to God. I suppose that is the doctrine to which you have reference?"

"Then, if a man is honest and benevolent, not from selfishness, his actions can't be right."

"They are not right; not in the sense in which slander is not right, but through defect, because they are not done in the fear and from the love of God." Mr. Wright again fell into a revery, while Mr. Beals and Mrs. Wright resumed their conversation.

A few years before Mr. Beals became pastor of the church, Mr. Wright's mind was strongly impressed on the subject of religion. A neighbor, a man of undoubted piety, zealous

for religion in general, and certain theories in particular, was his principal adviser. Now as Mr. Wright's life had been characterized by great honesty and kindness, his spiritual adviser deemed it important to convince him, or, rather, to enjoin it upon him, to repent of all such acts, as proceeding from pure selfishness. Now this did not accord with Mr. Wright's consciousness. Still, he did not venture to call in question the correctness of the theory on which his adviser proceeded, and hence was brought to a stand. He could not feel with respect to those acts as he was told he ought to feel. If he had been told that he had sinned, and that he had had no regard to God in them, his conscience would have pleaded guilty to the charge ; or if his attention had been turned to another class of sins, the same would have been true. But his attention was kept fixed upon these. No progress, he was told, could be made till his views and feelings were right here, and then, in regard to other things, his views and feelings would

become right, as a matter of course. The consequence was that, after a long and fruitless struggle, his impressions passed away. Had the true element of guilt been pointed out, and pressed home upon his conscience, it is probable he would have been led to feel the necessity of calling for help upon Him who is mighty to save.

Reference was made, during this period of anxiety, to the pastor—the pastor who then ministered to the flock—with respect to the truth of the proposition which laid at the bottom of Mr. Wright's difficulties, and he pronounced it to be true. Had he known the precise state of Mr. Wright's mind, his answer, if not his opinion, might have been somewhat modified. As it was, it prohibited all doubt on the part of Mr. Wright, and led to that relaxation of effort which hastened the decay of his serious impressions.

"That doctrine," resumed Mr. Wright, "has been the greatest thing in my way."

"It may have had an unfavorable influence

but there was, and is still, a much greater difficulty in your way."

"What is that?"

"An evil heart of unbelief."

During the silence that followed this remark, Mr. Beals was considering the most feasible way of addressing the conscience of his friend. It did not take him long to decide.

"I was thinking," said he, "as I was coming up the walk, and saw you all so happy at the table, what a blessed thing it would be if all there could have a seat at the marriage supper of the Lamb."

Mr. Wright dropped his head, and buried his face in his hands, but made no reply.

"Before long," continued Mr. Beals, "this happy family must be separated. One will go in one direction, and another in another; and one after another will be carried to the narrow house. It is sad to think of such separations, but what are these compared with separations of eternity? parents and children bidding each other eternal farewells at

the judgment—separated forever by the impassable gulf.” Mr. Wright’s tears fell fast, but he did not speak.

“I know of few families who owe more to the Lord than yours. You are blessed with health, competency, and the treasures of affection, more precious than gold. If any one was ever called upon to adopt the language of the Psalmist, ‘What shall I render unto the Lord for all his benefits?’ you are that man.”

Still there was no reply. The pastor did not deem it wise to add more. He closed the interview with prayer, and retired.

Mrs. Wright, who had long been an esteemed member of the Church, listened with eager interest to what had been said, and felt assured that the pastor had taken the course best adapted to make a deep impression on her husband’s mind. She retired to her closet to pray that the Spirit might cause the emotions excited by the appeal to lead to that godly sorrow that needeth not to be repented of.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE TWO STUDENTS IN THE OFFICE. — A PROPOSAL. — A CAPTURE. — AN INTERESTING INCIDENT. — A SAGE CONCLUSION.

THE resolution of Newall, to banish the form of Alice Gordon from his mind, was not as easily executed as some of his resolutions were. He had a strong will; one that had enabled him to resist the temptations to indolence and spurn the allurements of pleasure, bent as he was on the high purpose of placing his name among the mighty of the land. But the image of the maid of the farm-yard would force itself on his attention, even when the huge volumes of decisions were before him, and the desire to become acquainted with her would not listen to his logical exposition of the unreasonableness of its claims.

The two students were sitting in the office.

The sun began to go down in the west. Newall had before him a folio, in which was recorded much of human wisdom and of human folly. His eyes were on its pages, but his thoughts were wandering. Weathersby sat with his feet on his desk, which was very high. This position secured a good supply of blood to the head. He had no book before him; indeed, to do him justice, he seldom had one. His fingers were busily employed in destroying goose quills, and his thoughts engaged in calculating the probabilities in respect to, or concerning his future clients. Whether the probabilities of obtaining one were so small as not to justify the expense of preparing for one, or whether he acted on the principle of first getting the goose, it is certain that no such preparation was made. The copying of a few forms was the amount of his daily labors connected with the law. Whether he was a *rara avis in Themis*, it would be unwise hastily to decide.

As the sun was about to hide his disk be-

hind the mountain that skirted the distant horizon, Newall laid aside his folio, and, to the great relief of Weathersby, entered into conversation with him. "Weathersby, I am tired of this. I propose you show me some of your fair townswomen this evening."

"You never made a more sensible proposition in your life," said Weathersby, shutting up his knife, and taking down his feet from their perch. "Where shall we go?"

"That must be for you to determine, subject to my qualified veto," said Newall

"Suppose we try it at Burton's again?"

"No, no; once is enough for the present; variety is exceedingly desirable. There was a Miss Gordon they spoke of."

"You wouldn't like her."

"How do you know? Isn't she pretty?"

"Yes, very; but as demure as a Quakeress. She never has any thing to say for herself; besides, there are three other girls there."

"That is no serious objection. They are not carnivorous, are they?"

"No ; but they are quite too sober, and the old folks are always on hand. We had better go to the Burtons' this evening."

"Once is enough for the present."

"I'll make a compromise. You go with me there to-night, and I will go with you to Wright's to-morrow night."

"I can't possibly afford another evening for a fortnight.

"The truth is, I have an engagement at the Burtons' to-night, and it won't do for me to go any where else."

That settles the matter, then," said Newall, resuming his folio.

It was true that Weathersby was engaged at the Burtons'. It was also true that he had engaged, if possible, to decoy Newall there. He knew it would never do to take him to see Alice. His allowance of wine would be stopped forthwith, and all hopes of inducing the younger Miss Burton to change her name for that of Weathersby brought to an end.

Weathersby took his departure, and Newall

continued his studies till the twilight began to gather. He then closed his folio, and attempted, mentally, to review the acquisitions of the day. He found his command over his thoughts to be less perfect than usual on such occasions. He concluded that his brain had been overtasked, and that a short walk would restore his thoughts to their wonted obedience and vigor. He set out with no definite purpose as to the direction he should pursue, and soon met Mr. Weathersby with a Miss Burton on each arm. They were enjoying to the full the evening air. For this purpose they had considerably left their bonnets at home. The curls, ribbons, flowers, and gems that adorned their heads, were open to the free wooing of the breeze and the expected admiration of the beholder. Newall would have passed them, but they halted and blocked up the way. Miss Burton put forth the handle of her screen to prevent his design. He was thus fairly surrounded and captured by superior numbers.

“Newall, you will join us?” said Weathersby. “I will surrender a portion of my charge.” Miss Julia detached herself from Mr. Weathersby, and stood in readiness to receive the expected offer of Newall’s arm. It was offered, and its owner suffered himself to be led whithersoever Miss Burton pleased. She was pleased to lead him through the village, passing up on one side of the street and down the other, talking all the time with a voice as penetrating as that of the city watchman who used to sleep and sing in the vicinity of his father’s dwelling. Newall’s powers of self-control were great; they were seldom more severely taxed. He conducted himself with strict politeness, till, having made the circuit of the village, they came to Miss Burton’s door. She did not relinquish his arm, but was carrying him in, when, by a dextrous movement, he escaped. He could not be induced to enter by invitation and entreaties. It was unlucky for Miss Julia that she suffered him to disengage his arm. He pleaded

the necessary calls of business, and turned his footsteps toward the office. The escape of their prisoner detracted somewhat from the rapturous joy which his capture and exhibition had occasioned. But Weathersby endorsed the accuracy of his excuse, and proceeded to give an account of the business that he, Newall, had to transact that evening, in terms as intelligible to the Misses Burton as they were to himself. He was in high favor for the time being, in consequence of being accessory to the capture. Wine was furnished profusely, and his hope was strengthened, that, at some future day, some of the proceeds of the law's doings would be meted out to him, in connection with the person of Miss Clarissa Burton.

On his way to the office, he met Mr. Wright, who courteously bade him good evening, and entered into conversation with him. There was something so hearty and honest in his manner, that a man of Newall's make could not but be pleased by his advances.

When they reached the office, they stood

for a moment, till they brought their conversation to a close. Just as the farmer was passing on, he said, "My name is Wright. We all know who you are ; when a new man comes among us, we find out pretty soon who he is. I shall be glad to see you at my house."

Newall thanked him, and promised to call. At that moment Mr. Wright's daughters came up, on their way home. "Were you coming for us ?" said one of them.

"No, I was not ; I have to go to Mr. Blake's."

"Perhaps," said Newall, with his best bow, "Mr. Wright will allow me to act as his substitute in seeing the ladies home ?"

"Well, that is just as you and they can agree. This is Mr. Newall, girls."

Mr. Newall took silence for consent, and offered his arm to the lady nearest at hand. It did not happen to be Alice. The girls, somewhat discomposed at this sudden association with a city gentleman, were by no means loquacious during their walk homeward. They

gave civil and unaffected replies to his inquiries. In this, one thing, at least, was pleasant: there was no attempt to make an impression on his mind or heart. All his skill could not call forth the tones of Miss Gordon's voice. She left to her sisters the task of replying to such inquiries as his ingenuity could devise.

On their way to the farm, it was necessary to pass the Misses Burton's door. The eldest Miss Burton had placed herself by the window opening upon the street, ostensibly for the purpose of enjoying the cooling air, but really to observe whatever might take place in the street. It was well that the astral lamp burned dimly as the Wrights and their attendant passed, or the change that came over Miss Julia's countenance would have revealed too much of the workings of her soul. She was the only observer, and she did not communicate the result of her observations to her sister and Mr. Weathersby. He was therefore unable to account for the disturbance her

amiability seemed to have received. This was indicated by the peculiar character of her remarks, and at length by an abrupt departure to her chamber.

When Mr. Newall reached Mr. Wright's dwelling, he received a faint invitation to enter. He declined, and took his leave, with no invitation to call at a future time. It formed to him a pleasant contrast with the importunity of the Misses Burton. Perhaps his view of the case might have been a little different if he had not been in possession of an invitation from Mr. Wright. On his way home, he reflected on the importance of a knowledge of man in his various conditions, and concluded that an acquaintance with Mr. Wright, as it would conduce to this, would only be in furtherance of the purpose for which he had sought the retirement of a country village. He therefore inwardly resolved that he would take an early opportunity of calling at the farm-house, and cultivating the acquaintance of Mr. Wright. This resolution was formed

in face of the probability that the ladies, Alice not excepted, would be at home when he called, and might thus materially obstruct his progress in the study of the farmer's character. This disadvantage he heroically determined to meet and overcome.

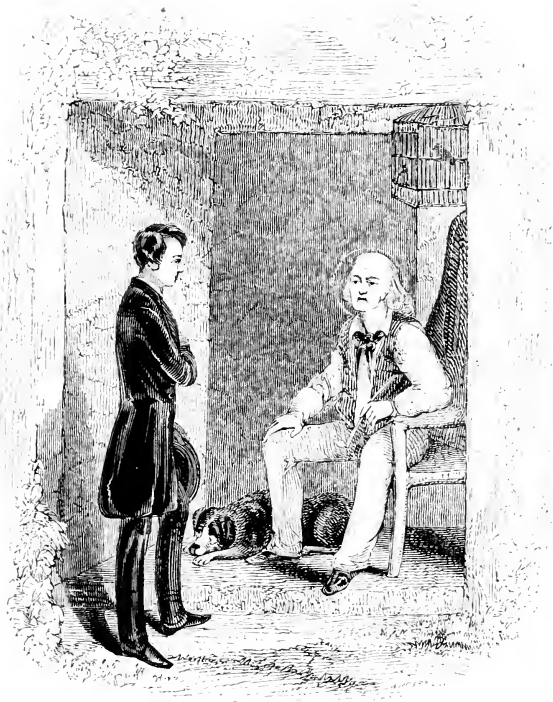
CHAPTER IX.

A WALK.—A VISIT TO THE FARM-HOUSE.—EFFECT OF THE CONVERSATION ON NEWALL'S OPINIONS.

It so happened that the very next evening Mr. Newall found himself so much exhausted by his studies as to deem a walk advisable, indeed necessary. Weathersby was in parts unknown. Newall had, he was certain, no fixed purpose to perform any other feat than that of a walk ; but still, as he might meet with some one, or possibly be induced to enter some habitation, he renewed his collar and cravat, and brushed his hat, and took a survey of so much of his person as was revealed by the small glass which hung in his bedroom adjoining the office. He stood at the door of the office for a moment, apparently hesitating as to the direction in which he should extend his perambulations. He set

out, accidentally, of course, in the direction of Mr. Wright's. When he drew near the residence of the Misses Burton, he crossed over to the other side of the street, having an instinctive love of liberty and fear of capture. When he approached Mr. Wright's he was not certain that he should make a call ; indeed, it was rather probable that he would extend his walk in that direction and return. But it so happened that the strongest motive in his mind, when he came opposite the gate, was to enter ; and in obedience, some would say necessary obedience, to the laws of mind, he entered, and was soon shaking hands with Mr. Wright, who had concluded his labors for the day, and was sitting on his door-stone. Mr. Wright invited him to enter, but he declined, and took a seat by the side of his host. His motive in calling was to study human nature in the person of Mr. Wright, and not to see the girls. They had been sitting by their father, but on Newall's approach they withdrew. Their voices were

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heard, and there was one to whose tones he paid more attention than to those of Mr. Wright. Mr. Wright was not slow in observing it, and rising, said, "Come, walk in ; it is hardly manners to keep you on the doorstep, and, if the truth was known, you had rather be in the house with the young folk."

Mr. Newall, deeming it disrespectful to dispute the assertion of one so much his senior, followed him into the house.

After a few moments of constraint and reserve, conversation became easy and animated, Alice, by common desire, rather than by common consent, taking the lead on the part of the ladies. She conducted it in such a manner as to lead Newall to the conclusion that true refinement was not confined to the vicinity of brick and marble and stock exchanges. There was a good sense, a freshness of emotion, a simplicity and nature about her conversation which he had never met with before. It was the more pleasant from its contrast with the stereotype forms and af-

fectations so common in the circles with which he had been familiar in the city. He did not find it necessary to adapt himself, or, rather, to lower his range of thought out of regard to her capacity. On the contrary, he felt that he had met his equal, and gave free expression to his choicest thoughts with the full conviction that they would be understood. The excitement occasioned by this rousing of her faculties, by coming in contact with a superior mind, gave a glow to her countenance and brilliancy to her eye that made Newall adopt the opinion that she was the most beautiful being he had ever seen. He was making such rapid progress in the study of human nature, that it was not till the clock in an adjoining room had told the hour of ten that he took his leave. He went home to meditate and dream of Alice Gordon.

Did sleep as early and profound as usual visit the couch of Alice that night? No. Her thoughts, called as they had been into such unwonted exercise, were long in ob-

taining the composure requisite for sleep. The first faint dawning of a new world is breaking in upon her mind. Is it well that it is so? Time, the great interpreter, alone can tell.

CHAPTER X.

NEWALL'S VISIT AT MR. WRIGHT'S DETECTED.—
DEBATES OF THE COMMITTEE. — NEWALL'S
CHANGE OF PLANS. — HIS INTERVIEW WITH
MR. BEALS.

THE movements of Newall had not escaped the vigilant observation of the Misses Burton. They saw him pass, though on the opposite side of the way, and they had an instinctive perception that he was on his way to visit Alice Gordon. The fact was verified, and the hour of his return ascertained. They resolved themselves into a committee of the whole on the state of the village, and sat to a late hour debating what measures the present state of affairs required them to adopt. That the city student should slight their advances and bestow his voluntary visits on Alice Gordon, the portionless orphan, the dependent on a farmer's bounty, was griev-

ous to be borne. It would not do to proclaim open hostilities, for his manly bearing, during the brief period of his secluded residence in the village, had won the respect of all. Surely he could not know the precise position in which Alice stood. Information on that point, adroitly communicated, might be of service. But how should the communication be made? This and many other fruitless questions were asked ere they resigned themselves to their pillows and their disturbed repose.

The next morning after the evening spent at Mr. Wright's, Newall arose with his mind far less deeply impressed with the importance of a profound knowledge of the science of the law. It was plain to his apprehension that the most accurate and extended acquaintance with books alone would be of small avail in promoting his advancement as an advocate or politician. He must become acquainted with men in the various walks of life, since from them briefs and votes must

be secured, or all legal learning would be in vain. Habits of conciliation, too, must be formed, and habits are most easily formed in youth. No time seemed more favorable for the acquisition of this knowledge, and the formation of these habits, than the present. Could he do a wiser thing, one better adapted to promote his success in life, than to spend a portion of his time in studying the characters and winning the esteem of those around him? It was plain to his logical mind that he could not; and his plans were accordingly modified in accordance with this decision of his judgment. Those who are disposed to think lightly of reason as determining the actions of man, may say that his perception of the importance of the argument was merely an excuse for yielding to his desire of studying the character and conciliating the favor of Alice Gordon. But all will not be so uncharitable, and assign to reason so little influence in creatures who boast so loudly of its possession. Newall, as the result of these

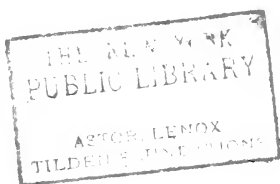
profound self-discussions, resolved to become acquainted, as soon as convenience might allow, with most of the inhabitants of the village, in which he thought it probable his stay might be more prolonged than was at first designed. In the execution of this resolve, it fell in with his sense of what was fitting to call on Mr. Beals. He did so on the afternoon of the day in the morning of which the above-described cogitations occurred.

Mr. Beals was pleased to receive a call from Mr. Newall, in regard to whose character he had formed the most favorable impressions. Ever watchful for opportunities of doing good, he soon, with his habitual sagacity, gave the conversation a direction which enabled him to produce a deep moral effect, for the time being at least, on the mind of his youthful visitor. A few specimens of natural history which lay in the pastor's study naturally led to the consideration of the natural sciences. In these Newall was a respectable proficient.

They spoke of the laws of the natural world: both agreed in regarding these as the stated mode of the divine operation—as the laws of God. They spoke of the great waste of time and effort occasioned by ignorance and disregard of these laws. On this topic Newall was skillfully led by the pastor to furnish numerous and striking illustrations. Mr. Beals then spoke of the laws of the moral world as established by the same being, and as sustaining the same relations to human effort. It was not said in words, but it was distinctly brought before Newall's mind: "If a man build a house in disregard of God's law of gravitation, it will certainly fall. If a man build his moral edifice in disregard of God's moral law, it will as certainly fall. If a man form his plans of life disregarding the laws of the moral system, they will as certainly, in the end, be defeated, as the plans that are formed disregarding the laws of the material system."

The interview was brought to a close. Newall retired, with the weighty thought





above unfolded resting upon his mind. It led to some degree of self-application. A vague feeling of uneasiness arose in his mind in view of the more than suspected truth that he was building upon the sand.

What was the effect of this? Did it lead him to a careful examination of his plans with the purpose of conforming them to the laws that can no more be successfully opposed than the throne of God can be overturned? No. This was too great a work to be performed, too great a sacrifice to be made. The perception of the fact that he was building upon the sand, only led to a transient relaxation of effort. It rendered him more disposed to yield to the inclinations of his social nature.

CHAPTER XI.

A DISCUSSION CONCERNING WAR AND MATRIMONY.—TAKING TIME TO CONSIDER.—ANOTHER CALL AT MR. WRIGHT'S.

AFTER tea, as Newall returned to the office, he did not at once take up a book. This encouraged Weathersby to enter into conversation. The effect of Newall's industrious habits had been such that he rarely, if ever, spoke to him unless he seemed to invite it by closing his book.

"That was a bad move of yours last night," said Weathersby.

"I doubt that proposition," said Newall.

"The ladies felt slighted, and it was rather a hard strain on your veracity, as well as my own."

"How on your own?"

"Why, like a good friend, I indorsed your

excuse for not coming in, and went into particulars to show that you could not possibly get through with the pressing business you had on hand before midnight. I had just finished my argument, when, by way of clincher, you passed with Miss Gordon on your arm."

"Miss Wright."

"All the same thing—belong to the same establishment."

"I am much obliged to you for your good intentions, but must say that I have no wish to have the truth suffer on my account. I had rather suffer myself."

"It would be inconvenient to have them," motioning with his thumb in a particular direction, "dead set against you. They rule here."

"But I am not a native-born subject, nor have I been naturalized. By the way, what do the authorities say on that point?"

Newall alluded to a question which had arisen in the office in relation to a point con-

nected with naturalization and the law of nations, and Weathersby had been directed to consult certain authorities.

“O bother ! I don’t know what they say ; stick to the point of importance. Will you go with me to-night and make a peace-offering ?”

“ In what form ?”

“ In the form of an explanation, or, if your views of truth forbid that, let it assume the form of a few compliments and bows, and large words of city shape and sound.”

“ No, I can’t do any such thing.”

“ You had better.”

“ I think not.”

“ I know you had.”

Newall was not disposed to carry the discussion or dispute further, and so kept silence.

“ Well, then,” said Weathersby, “ we shall have war ; and I am afraid I shall have to take sides against you.”

Newall was disposed to smile at the serious tone in which this was uttered.

"I don't quite see what is to place you in a belligerent position with respect to me."

"Why, I must side with them or be cut loose, and I can't afford that."

"Now, Weathersby, just rouse yourself and go to work, and depend on nobody but yourself."

Weathersby shook his head.

Newall had become a good deal interested in Weathersby, mainly from his extreme good nature, and partly from the possession of talents, which his indolence and feebleness of moral purpose permitted to remain unemployed.

"I might have done something once, if I had had you to set me on, but I have got so used to my ways that I can not change now. I must get a wife who has the cash. I will manage to find law enough to take care of it."

"Look to something higher and nobler. Money is of little importance to happiness."

"I have heard that opinion expressed be-

fore, but it was always in connection with a well-lined purse or a rich father. I might think with you, if I were the son of Newall, Jenkins, and Co. ; but, as I am not, and as my wardrobe is verging toward the point of dilapidation, and my resources are confined to my talents, I think it best to make them available as speedily as possible."

"I hope you are not meditating any rash measures?" The idea of a possible elopement entered Newall's mind.

"No, nothing rash, all very sober and rational ; more reason in it than any thing else. I had as lief tell you all about it as not. Clarissa Burton stands as high in her father's good graces as her elder sister does, if not a little higher, and, besides, has a matter of two thousand dollars of her own, though that fact is fortunately unknown to her. Her honored father does not know that I am privy to said interesting fact. Clarissa is willing, nay rather desirous of making a gentleman belonging to one of the learned professions hap-

py. Now as both of those conditions meet, or will soon meet in me, why should not I be that man? I am not extravagant, you know, and I am not sure she could possibly do a better thing for herself."

"You value yourself at two thousand dollars, then, do you?"

"I know it is dog cheap, but it is about as much as I can reasonably be expected to bring in the present state of the market. They used to tell us in college, you know, that the increase in the supply knocked down prices, and, in regard to our profession, the cry is, and will be, 'still they come.'"

"Now, Weathersby, give up that plan and go to reading; make your own way, and marry a woman for love, and be happy with her!"

"Where is the money to come from?"

"From the exercise of your talents in the labors of your profession."

"I'm a diffident man—I don't think I should succeed; and, besides, I have now gone too

far to draw back honorably ; so don't make me sorry for it."

"Have you proposed, then?"

"Yes ; but, upon my honor, I made no protestations of being in danger of dying of love. Papa has the matter under consideration before this time—if he hadn't before she slept."

"His decision may be unfavorable to your wishes, as I hope it may."

"No danger of that. His consideration will be a good deal like that of Squire Sherwood when I argued that trespass case before him."

He paused, expecting Newall would ask him what it was, but, as he did not, he resolved not to lose an opportunity of telling the story and diverting his own mind, if not that of his auditor, from a topic not quite as pleasant to him as topics connected with matrimony usually are to those concerned.

"When I was engaged to manage the case, knowing that my witnesses were not first-

rate, and fearing lest my diffidence would prevent my making an argument that would convince the understanding of the court, I took occasion to call on him and talk the matter over with him as a friend. 'I see how the case is,' said the squire, puffing like a locomotive on one of my long nines, 'I see how the case is. I shall take time to decide on the trial; but there will be no difficulty in doing justice, the case is so clear.' He did take time, and decided in our favor, securing me a good fee, and enabling me to win a bet of five dollars on the result of the case, which its rather unpromising aspect tempted an old miser to make, I offering him two to one. I should not be much afraid to make the same bet on the result of old Burton's deliberation on the matter above named."

Newall was rather disgusted than amused by the story, and left the office for his evening walk entirely undecided whether to go in the direction toward Mr. Wright's or not.

The foundation on which Weathersby rest-

ed his confidence that Burton would decide in his favor, was more solid than Newall imagined. Burton was acquainted with Weathersby's management of the case above mentioned, and with the still more important fact of his winning five dollars from the miser. He had expressed a warm admiration of the genius that could produce such results. He boldly predicted his success as a lawyer. when he should be fairly acquainted with all its snares. "The man," these were the memorable words of Mr. Burton, gent., "the man that can get five dollars out of Sayres can get rich where another man would starve."

Weathersby inferred that his suit would meet with the approbation of Mr. Burton, and in this he was not disappointed.

On leaving the office, Newall went to the post-office, where he found a letter which rendered it necessary for him to repair to the city for a few days. He deemed it reasonable that he should inform the Wrights of the fact, and, to make sure of the propriety of his

visit, he took a volume to which allusion had been made in his conversation with Miss Gordon, and which she had expressed a wish to see.

He received a cordial welcome, and the evening passed more pleasantly than the former one. The constraint then felt by the Misses Wright was, in a good degree, removed, and they joined in the conversation. In consequence, Alice's words were fewer, but they were more effective toward the furtherance of her acquaintance with Mr. Newall. It was with unfeigned reluctance that Newall bade his new friends adieu. He received a cordial invitation to renew his visit when he should return from the city.

CHAPTER XII.

ALICE LESS HAPPY THAN FORMERLY.—MISS BURTON'S VISIT TO MRS. APTHORP. — MRS. APTHORP'S VISIT TO MRS. WRIGHT.

FROM the time of Newall's above-named visit to the farm-house, Alice was less happy than before. There was not the same interest to the scenes around her, nor had the voices of her friends the same charm. Was her fancy captivated by the polished visitor? Did she begin to institute comparisons between the plain manners of the farm-house and his easy address? Was her heart touched for one who had not sued for it? No. Far from it. Her intellectual nature was awaking. Newall's conversation had opened to her new avenues of thought, of which she had no knowledge, and she desired to tread them. The desire for knowledge, for a higher intellectual life, was spring-

ing up. The longings of the intellect are only less disturbing than the longings of the heart.

She eagerly perused the volume left by Newall, and the effect was to increase the desires which threatened so seriously to disturb her peace. For the first time Mrs. Wright discerned what might be called a decay of eagerness in attention to her requests.

The day after Newall had left the village, Miss Burton the elder set out on a visit of benevolence to Mrs. Apthorp. She had not seen her for some time, and it was certainly possible that she might be suffering from sickness and want. She occupied a tenement belonging to Mr. Burton. Miss Burton entered, and happily found her in the enjoyment of excellent health. She put herself at once in an attitude of waiting for Miss Burton's commands, her experience having been of such a nature as led her not to expect much disinterested benevolence from human nature in general, or Miss Burton in particular.

Miss Burton did not seem to have any precise object in calling further than to inquire into the state of her health. She complimented her on the neat appearance of her room, which compliment was deserved. To her scrupulous neatness, domestic and personal, she owed access to families to which she was not entitled, morally or otherwise.

The conversation flagged, and yet Miss Burton remained. It therefore behooved Mrs. Apthorp to entertain her.

"So," said she, "you have the rich young lawyer after you already."

"I don't know what you mean."

This was said in a tone intended to deny all connection with the lawyer, and yet not forbid further remark on the subject. Mrs. Apthorp, supposing it was meant for maiden coyness, replied,

"Some persons of the first education can be very ignorant when they think it is best to be."

"I'm sure I don't know what you mean."

“They do say that Mr. Newall is at your house about every night.”

“They say what they have no right to say; as if we should permit one of whom we know nothing to be intimate at our house.”

The sharp tone in which this was uttered showed to Mrs. Apthorp that a tack must be taken.

“Sure enough; now that is just what I said to Keziah. ‘Keziah,’ says I, ‘if it is so, then you may depend upon it that Mr. Burton, or some of his friends in the city, know all about this Mr. Newall, else he would not be allowed to visit there.’”

“We know nothing about him, and don’t wish to. Mr. Weathersby brought him with him to our house one evening—he could not refuse to do it without a quarrel—and—”

“As they are in the same office,” added Mrs. Apthorp, parenthetically.

“And that is the only time he has been in the house.”

“Do tell!”

“One evening he met us walking with Mr. Weathersby—”

“A nice man, too, is that Mr. Weathersby. We all know him,” interrupted Mrs. Aphthorp.

“And he turned and walked with us: we could not prevent it without making trouble for Weathersby. He came with us to the door, but not a step further.”

This was said in a tone indicating that regard for the feelings and interests of Weathersby would not have restrained them from extreme measures if Newall had persevered in his purpose of effecting an entrance.

“Well, I never heard the like. Don’t he pretend to be intimate at your house?”

“I can’t say. I leave him to those who can afford to be intimate with strangers.”

Mrs. Aphthorp knew she was expected to inquire who those insane persons were.

“Where do they make so much of him?”

“I do not wish to accuse any body of throwing herself in his way.”

Mrs. Aphthorp knew that this meant that

she did vehemently wish to accuse somebody of throwing herself in his way.

“Who does he go to see?” said the shrewd sycophant.

“Alice Gordon.” The tone and the flushed countenance told a tale to Mrs. Apthorp which she was not slow in comprehending.

“Alice Gordon! Does Mrs. Wright know it? Does he see her at Mrs. Wright’s?”

“He can’t see her any where else: it is not her fault, however.”

“Well, I have heard she was discontented and wanted to get away. Dear me, how ungrateful folks are!”

“Mrs. Wright ought to know how she feels.”

“So she had; poor woman, doing so much for her—she ought to know it, and the girls too.”

“Were you going that way for any thing this afternoon? I thought it likely you might be, and I brought some tea with me for you to take to Mrs. Bebee. Here it is; if you hap-

pen to be out, you can use some of it, and take the rest to Mrs. Bebee. Don't tell her who it came from."

Miss Burton rose to take her leave. "I will go right away," said Mrs. Apthorp, "and you may depend on my doing your errands for you faithfully. There's my quarter's rent is most due, and I haven't the money. If the lady would speak to her father for me?"

"I will see that you are not troubled," said the lady, as she withdrew.

Mrs. Apthorp placed the tea in her own caddy, well knowing that she was, in so doing, fulfilling Miss Burton's benevolent intentions. She then swept her hearth, dusted the chairs and her broom-handle, and set out for Mrs. Wright's.

Mrs. Wright received her courteously, but as coldly as her nature would permit her to receive any one. Conversation was with some difficulty sustained for some half hour, and, as Alice was present, there was

no opportunity of fulfilling Miss Burton's instructions.

At last Alice withdrew for a moment.

"I am sorry to hear that Alice is not as contented as she was—very sorry. I used to know her mother, and we all used to think every thing of her father; every body was rejoiced to see her have so good a home, and she seemed so contented and happy here, too, for a time—" She paused, being a little at a loss how to complete the sentence.

"I have not seen any change in Alice," said Mrs. Wright. She was well aware of Mrs. Apthorp's character, and was fully on her guard.

At this moment Alice passed through the room. Her countenance was not quite as serene as usual. Perhaps it was owing to the presence of Mrs. Apthorp, one of the few whom she found it impossible to love.

"She don't look quite as cheerful as she did. I hope she will know what is for her good. I'm sure I wish her well; but young

people will be imprudent, and we must expect it."

Mrs. Wright made no reply, but showed so much displeasure in her manner that Mrs. Apthorp thought it prudent to retire.

The only immediate consequence of this visit, with respect to Alice, was a tender kiss on her fair forehead from Mrs. Wright when next she came near her.

Mrs. Apthorp retired somewhat discomfited, but not discouraged. Her experience had told her that labors to do mischief were seldom in vain. She resolved not to be foiled in her purpose. A feeling of personal resentment, combining with her purpose to subvert the ends of Miss Burton, determined her to persevere. As the daughters had heard what she had said, she confidently expected fruit from the seed already sown.

CHAPTER XIII.

NEWALL'S RETURN TO THE VILLAGE.—AN EARLY CALL AT THE FARM-HOUSE.—THE EFFECT OF MRS. APTHORP'S EFFORTS

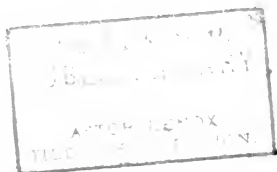
AFTER a week's absence from the village Newall returned. He hastened to the farm-house to meet his friends. He was warmly welcomed by the parents, but coldly received by the young ladies, with the exception of Alice. She greeted him with a manner to him exceedingly pleasant, but which she would by no means have exhibited had she regarded him in any other light than one who ministered to the wants of her intellectual nature. The reserve manifested by the other girls led him to address his remarks to the parents and to Alice. She at length observed something peculiar in the manner of the sisters, and the discovery put an end to her

cheerfulness and sociability. Newall noticed the change, but was totally unable to divine the cause. He took his leave. He saw the coldness of the Misses Wright, but could detect nothing of displeasure in Alice's manner. He at once suspected that the influence of the Misses Burton had been at work. He cared not for it, he was persuaded, except so far as it might affect Miss Gordon's happiness, for whom he felt a disinterested regard.

As soon as the girls were by themselves, Alice hastened to ask an explanation of the, to her, strange occurrences of the evening. "What was the matter with you?" said she to Eliza; "what does it mean?"

"If," answered Eliza, coldly, "I thought Miss Gordon did not know, I should certainly tell her."

Alice gave her a look of reproachful tenderness and sorrow which well-nigh overcame her, despite the misapprehensions under which she labored. She was on the point of bursting into tears, and throwing her arms





around Alice's neck and begging her pardon, when Alice bade her good-night and retired to her chamber, not to sleep, but to remember that she was an orphan, and to wet her couch with tears.

She arose in the morning with a pale cheek, with sorrow written thereon. Her adopted parents kindly inquired if she were ill, and, receiving an answer in the negative, forbore to intrude upon her grief, judging it was caused by some fresh recollection of the departed ones. She attempted to perform the usual labors of the day, but was often compelled to retire and weep. The hearts of the girls were softened by her distress. "Perhaps," said Mary, "it is not true; let us ask her."

"We promised not to tell her what we heard."

"We did wrong to do so, for we condemn unheard. I am almost certain it is not true." With the approbation of her sisters, Mary followed Alice to her room. Alice read her

sympathizing looks aright. She threw herself on her neck and sobbed aloud.

“What have I done, that you treat me so?”

“We were told—” said Mary, hesitating.

“You were told what?”

“That you knew that Mr. Newall had spoken slightly of us as ignorant country girls.”

“It is not true. Oh! how could you believe it? I never heard him speak except when you were present.”

“I am very sorry that I spoke as I did to you.”

“You do not believe that I have been to blame?”

“Certainly not. We have been to blame, and we ask your forgiveness.”

It was cordially granted.

Mary went to make her report to her sisters. As Alice came from her chamber, each gave her the kiss of reconciliation. The smile returned to the cheek of Alice, but it dwelt not so steadily there as before. There

was the distinctly-perceived fact that she had met with injustice and unkindness, and, though she harbored no unkindness in return, yet the recollection of the fact would cause the smile to fade. Her confidence in the affection of those around her had been shaken, and could not be restored. The tongue of slander might again discharge its venom, and again she might be constrained to weep bitter tears by those on whose affections she had once as much reliance as on the firm positions of the everlasting hills.

CHAPTER XIV.

UNSATISFACTORY VISITS. — WEATHERSBY'S EXPLANATION AND ADVICE.

WHEN Newall next called at Mr. Wright's, Alice absented herself from the parlor. The Misses Wright did not intend to be rude ; but the recollection of the injustice of which they had been guilty, in connection with his name, and a suspicion that his visit was designed for Alice, occasioned a constraint that made the interview by no means pleasant. Eliza sought and urged Alice to join them in the parlor, but in vain. It was not perverseness which led her to decline the invitation. She knew that the charm of perfect confidence once broken, jealousies would easily arise. She knew that she could no longer receive the attentions of the visitor with certainty that no evil consequences would ensue. It was a

hardship, it was a sad denial to relinquish the acquaintance of one so immeasurably superior in mind and cultivation to any into whose society she had previously been thrown. She was placed in a position in which a movement either way might prove unfortunate. The decision was doubtless for the best ; still the uncomfortable feelings experienced during the interview by her sisters were set, unconsciously perhaps, to her account.

Newall repeated his call with the same success. The evident desire manifested by him to see Miss Gordon neither increased the self-complacency of her sisters, nor rendered them less disposed to give credit to the reports now rife respecting his contempt for the plebeian ranks.

Newall, though a shrewd observer of men, as well as a diligent student of books, had no very accurate knowledge of the influences which ebb and flow in a country village. He, therefore, could not solve the problem of Alice's non-appearance, and of the evident

coldness of the Misses Wright. He determined to consult Weathersby, knowing that he was far better read in village scandal than himself.

Since Newall's return from the city, Weathersby had transferred his locality from the office to Miss Burton's keeping-room, partly because the lounge was more comfortable than the office chair, and partly in deference to Miss Burton's wishes. She was unwilling that he should be exposed to contamination by daily intercourse with so depraved a being as Newall, as his insensibility to Miss Burton's merits had conclusively proved himself to be.

Newall could easily have lured him back to the office, if he could have spent the time in talking that he spent in study.

When next Weathersby entered, Newall laid aside his studies, and gave indication that he was prepared for conversation.

"That's clever, now," said Weathersby; "you can be the best fellow in the world ;

always would be, if it were not for that unfortunate notion which you have got that you must know a great deal of law."

"I wish to consult you on a matter somewhat in your line."

"Then it must relate to men, women, or cigars," biting very dextrously the point from one, and drawing a match across the table, and setting the smoke in motion.

"It relates to women."

"Then I have only to stipulate that it have no reference to certain individuals, and you shall draw on my wisdom without stint."

"It has reference to the ladies of Mr. Wright's family."

"Very good. Now let me hear the facts of the case."

"Well, after having been invited and welcomed there, now, without any error on my part, so far as I can see, Miss Gordon does not see me, and the rest are as cold as icicles. I want you to explain the mystery."

"You know, or I do, which is just the same

thing, that my friend Squire Sherwood says my statement of the facts of the case are always sufficient to enable him to decide, without any other proofs. Now I will state your facts over again, and perhaps they will carry their explanation with them. Well, you, Mr. Newall, student at law, and son of Newall, Jenkins, and Co., of New York, are pleased with the beauty and other qualities of Miss Alice Gordon, and very properly too, for she is the best-looking, and, I believe, the best-hearted girl I ever saw, except, of course, one who shall be nameless."

Miss Burton might not have been altogether pleased with the indifference with which this exception was made.

"You fall in with the old gentleman—he is a gentleman every inch of him, in spite of his hard hands and sunburned face, and is very civil. You call at his house under the grave pretence that you desire to see him, and his wife, and his daughters, indigenous and exotic. You underrate their, that is, the girls',

powers of observation, and bestow a little more of your time and attention on Miss Alice than she is strictly entitled to as one of the family. Possibly she may show herself a little proud of it, though I guess not; at any rate, the others are a little envious or jealous, and make it wisdom on the part of Alice to remain in her chamber. You watch and wait for her in vain; all this is clearly perceived by the Misses Wright, and they are vexed and treat you coldly, knowing, better than you do, that you call not to see them, but Alice. Besides, there are certain rumors afloat as to your extreme aristocracy; these naturally increase the suspicions of the Wrights, and, perhaps, add to the shyness of Miss Gordon. Now, having argued the case after my way, I will give you my advice, and that is, to take up your quarters in some other region, where there is no Alice Gordon or Miss—”

“Burton,” added Newall. Weathersby nodded, and went on:

“I should be sorry to have you go—

very, if I were at liberty. You know how I am situated. You don't want Alice Gordon. If you think you do, you are mistaken; at least, you won't want her after you get back into the city. It may be pleasant amusement for you while here, but still, 'what is sport to you may be death to her.' It don't take many words from such a man as you are to put a poor girl's heart out of her own keeping, and you don't want her. Newall, Jenkins, and Co., and all their wives and daughters, would object to your marrying her, even if your own ambition did not lead you to wed among the nobility. No, no. Pack up, and when you are governor or president, if you can find a good office, that is, a good salary and no labor, remember your faithful friend and adviser."

Newall remained silent for some time, while Weathersby labored successfully to envelop his head in a cloud of smoke.

"Weathersby, it is really too bad for a man of your capacity, and, I may add, your good feeling, to be content to—"

"Do nothing," said Weathersby.

"Yes."

"Now the question is, whether I do not secure as much happiness by doing nothing as you will by your intense exertion. You will succeed, that is, if you don't fail, and you will be happy in it, perhaps. It must be pleasant to feel conscious of the possession of power—to feel that one is a great man; it also is a pleasant thing to have a snug parlor with plenty of cigars. Now, considering the fact that we act on the same principle—I mean so far as our general plans of life are concerned—I am rather inclined to lean to the opinion that I am rather the wiser man of the two. But the truth of the matter, Newall, is, that neither of us are wise. That old woman that is passing is wiser than we are."

"How so?"

"Why, because she—she—is a real Christian, and finds something to rejoice in in every thing that comes along, and has a good

title to everlasting happiness, which, I take it, neither you nor I have."

As he said this he rose, and, rather nervously, threw away the remains of his cigar, and in other ways gave evident proof that he was not as indifferent to the last-mentioned subject as he would fain have Newall believe.

Newall's feelings were deeply moved by the last observations of Weathersby; they were so unexpected, so out of keeping with what he understood of Weathersby's character. He leaned his forehead on the edge of his desk, and thought of the folly of living for time alone; of laboring and toiling to gain a name, while immortality was regarded worthy of no effort.

Weathersby seemed to have no wish to continue the conversation: he rose and went to his accustomed place.

CHAPTER XV.

NEWALL'S SELF-COMMUNINGS AND RESOLUTIONS.

—HIS VISIT TO THE PASTOR.

THE conversation of Weathersby, though marked with apparent levity, made a serious impression on Newall's mind. After reflecting for a time on the lack of wisdom in neglecting his spiritual relations, and deferring a further consideration and action to a more convenient season, he turned his thoughts toward the subject in relation to which he had sought light from Weathersby.

He was sure that Weathersby did not understand at all the true character of his views and feelings toward Miss Gordon. Still, he was led to ask himself why he was so desirous of becoming acquainted with her, and what might be the effect of that acquaintance on her welfare. The result of his long-continued medi-

tations was, that he would, at an early day, comply with the advice of his indolent friend. As it would first be necessary to communicate with his father, he took no immediate steps toward the execution of this design. It was with regret that he formed this purpose. He had become attached to the place, apart from its inhabitants. It would be at no small sacrifice that he should so far alter his plans as to seek a new place of retirement. But his sense of justice required the sacrifice. He must not be the occasion of discomfort to one so unprotected, not to say so lovely.

The Sabbath came, and he met Alice in the church-yard gate. The sweet smile assured him that no prejudice had been excited in her mind against him, and the sad expression of countenance which appeared when the smile had faded, and which remained during the services, drew largely on his sympathies. Had he been the occasion of disturbing her relations to the family, and of rendering her unhappy? It would grieve

him to be the occasion of injury to any one, much more to one so gentle as Alice, and of sensibilities so keen. His departure must be delayed till he had done something, if possible, toward repairing the injury he unwillingly had caused.

After expending a considerable amount of thought and feeling on the subject, and finding himself unable to devise any means for her relief, he resolved to seek the advice of the worthy pastor. He had confidence in his true benevolence, and in his peculiar interest for the orphan, Alice. On Monday he called on Mr. Beals, and made a statement of the case. While so doing, Mr. Beals eyed him with a scrutiny which he had never observed before.

"I fear it may be as you seem to think it is," said Mr. Beals. "I am very sorry. I had hoped that she had found a true home, where she would be happy, that is, so far as we can be happy in this world of sin."

"I am sure she is not happy, and I am not

sure that she would always be so if matters were not now as they are. She has a mind that could never be content with the routine of a farm-house, or be satisfied with the society of a farm-house, however kind the inmates may be."

"All do not regard the intellectual as you do, my young friend. There are those who, like the apostle, have learned, in whatsoever state they are in, to be content. Miss Gordon has made progress in that lesson, I trust. I have a high opinion of her capacity, and should be glad to see her educated, but I have not the means of educating her, and she has neither portion nor relative. When my excellent friend and his family received her, I thought the best possible provision was made for her."

"If it could be done without injury to her feelings, and the source could be entirely concealed, I could induce my father to furnish the funds for her education. You, sir, could manage that, and I beg that you will do so."

This was the opening of a new idea to

Newall, and he was prepared to press it with constitutional ardor.

“I am no adept in concealment. Much as Alice, I am sure, would delight to pursue a liberal course, she could not bring herself to consent on the terms you propose. I give you due credit for your disinterestedness”—a mischievous twinkle might have been detected by an acute observer—“and I will consider what can be done to promote her welfare. I can hardly think it necessary that you should leave our village if you find it favorable to the object for which you came. I would advise that you cease from visiting at Mr. Wright’s, as you have concluded to do. In the mean time, I shall be glad to see you at any time, and will communicate with you if any thing occurs that will enable you to be of service to the orphan.”

Newall returned to his study with increased admiration of the pastor’s kindness, and fully prepared to surrender his plans to his better judgment. His design of leaving the village was laid aside.

CHAPTER XVI.

ALICE'S VISIT TO HER PASTOR.—AN ACCIDENTAL
INTERVIEW WITH NEWALL.

THE day after Newall's last-mentioned visit to Mr. Beals, Miss Gordon called. She was most cordially greeted by her pastor, who, observing the depression that had settled on her brow, inquired if she were ill.

"No, sir ; I am very well, that is, I am not ill. I have come to you for advice. I am afraid you will think me very foolish."

"I am sure I shall think no such thing."

"I have come to ask you if you thought it possible for me to teach a small school in some retired place where they have had but few advantages."

A change passed over Mr. Beals's countenance. It was caused by a perception of the fact that her home was no longer pleasant.

She noticed the expression, and, in a tone of alarm, said, "Do not misapprehend me. You know I would do nothing without your approbation."

"Your home, then, is not what it was?"

"I would not say so for the world, that is, unless truth and duty required it. Mr. and Mrs. Wright are as kind as it is possible for them to be, and I love them as my own soul."

"Would they be willing to have you teach?"

"I fear not. That is the great difficulty next to my incapacity. Do you think I could possibly teach a small school?"

"I have no doubt of it whatever; but is it necessary? Your feelings being as they are toward Mr. and Mrs. Wright, why not endure whatever may be unpleasant silently for their sakes?"

A look of surprise and pain was at first her only reply. She was grieved that he should for a moment suppose that a regard to her own comfort had led her to propose a

course that she thought would not meet the approbation of her adopted parents.

“If that were all that was to be considered, I should never have troubled you with this call. I have received from Mr. and Mrs. Wright, and from all the family, kindness that puts me under obligations for a lifetime, obligations which it will be a pleasure to me at all times to recognize. It is my conviction that it is best for the family that I do what I can for my own support, and separate myself from it for a season, that has led me here to ask you if I were capable of teaching; and further, to ask you to use your influence to secure me a school such as I could probably manage. I will then endeavor to get my friends’ consent. But without your consent I will do nothing.”

“You are a noble girl. I will consider the matter. A gentleman not long since offered to furnish means to enable you to pursue your studies.”

“May I inquire who was so kind?”

“It was on the express condition that you

should never know the source. "Would you avail yourself of the provision on those terms?"

"By no means. There are few on whom I would be dependent; on an unknown friend, never. I should not know to whom to be grateful, nor be certain that he was one to whom I could be under obligation and breathe freely."

"How independent our little schoolmistress is growing," said the pastor, playfully; "still, I can not say I disapprove your views. I told him I thought you would not consent to any such arrangement."

"I am much obliged to you and to him also."

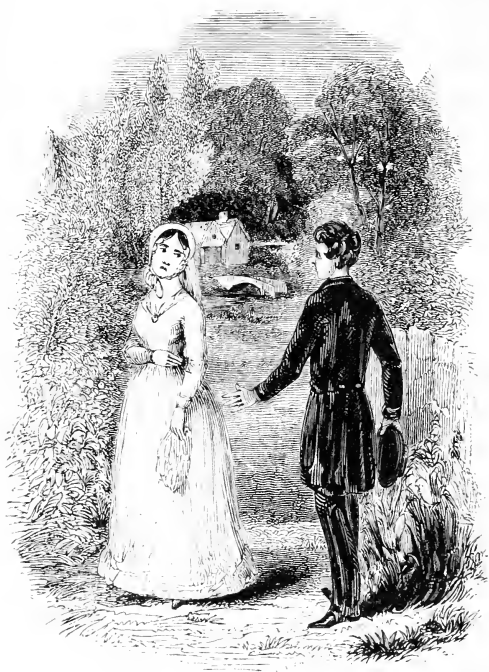
"I think I shall approve and try to further your plans. Do not be cast down. You have warm friends, and a Father all-powerful, who watches over you more tenderly than that parent over whose grave we have wept together. Commit your ways unto Him. We will spend a moment in asking His direction and blessing."

They kneeled down, and in a short, fervent prayer he commended the orphan to the Father of the fatherless, and besought Him to be the guide of her youth. She rose with a lighter heart and took her leave.

On her way home she accidentally met Mr. Newall. It was purely accidental so far as she was concerned. It is not certain but that the sight of a lady, which strongly reminded him of Alice Gordon, entering the parsonage, as he chanced to stand for a moment in the door of his study, had a great influence in convincing his judgment that his health required him to take a walk, and that the purest air would be found along the road leading from the parsonage toward Mr. Wright's. It was a back road, and finely shaded, and hence formed an admirable locality for a meditative walk. And a meditative walk this was to Newall. He meditated on the fact whether he was observed or not as he turned into that road; he weighed the probabilities respecting the length or shortness of Miss Gordon's

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call ; and also the probabilities of her immediate return to the farm-house. It was almost the first time that he had performed an act from which he shrunk from observation. He was remarkable for openness of bearing and freedom from all concealment. Why was he anxious to avoid observation now ? He did not ask himself that question, though he was distinctly conscious of the fact. At length a lady was seen approaching in the distance. It proved to be Miss Gordon. He turned and walked with her for a short distance, while a few words were exchanged which satisfied him that no unfavorable impression respecting him existed in her mind. Was it necessary that he be assured of this that his disinterested benevolence should have free scope—that his secret acts, with reference to her welfare, might be effective ?

This accidental meeting accidentally took place at a point which was visible neither from Mr. Wright's nor Misses Burton's, but it was distinctly within eye range of Mrs. Ap-

thorp's. It was believed that few events occurred within that range which were not the objects of Mrs. Apthorp's vision. This alarming event certainly was not an exception to the general rule. Report was speedily made at headquarters, which, after having received sundry modifications, was prepared for general circulation.

CHAPTER XVII.

ALICE'S REPORT OF HER VISIT.—HER DEPART-
URE.

“WELL, Alice, whom have you seen?” said Eliza to her on her return from the visit described in the last chapter.

“I saw Mr. and Mrs. Beals.”

“Didn’t you call any where else?”

“No ; I stayed there so long that I thought I might be wanted at home.”

“I wouldn’t have come home if I wanted to go any where else. We could have done the work without you. We hurried to get done before you got home.”

“You were very kind to do so : I felt that I ought to have hurried to get home sooner.”

“I wish you wouldn’t take so much pains to do every thing just right. We know you always mean right ; and when you take so

much trouble it makes us feel as though you do not feel yourself at home."

This conversation was in all kindness and sincerity on the part of Eliza, and her sister's views and feelings were not different from her own. She had observed a little more solicitude on the part of Alice to render herself useful, and to avoid the appearance, not of evil, but appearances that could possibly lead to a misconstruction of her motives. After their acknowledgment of their injustice to her on the occasion above described, and the restoration of their confidence, they had no idea but that Alice could resume the same position with respect to them which she held before—certainly they really desired it. But that, though as earnestly desired by Alice, might never be.

It will be observed that Alice did not inform Eliza, in reply to her question, that she had seen Mr. Newall. What had already taken place in the family with respect to him would render her extremely disinclined to

make mention of his name, even if his disinterested benevolence manifested during their brief meeting had not affected her so much as to render it doubtful whether she could pronounce his name with entire composure.

This innocent act of meeting with Newall, and of omitting to give an account of the same, was speedily, from causes that we stop not to describe, the occasion of much anxiety and suffering, and confirmed to unchangeableness her purpose of entering on a scheme of self-support.

Mr. Beals had written to his native township with reference to obtaining a school for Alice. In one of the smaller districts there was a vacancy, and a teacher was wanted without delay. He communicated the intelligence to Alice, and it was agreed that she should apply at once to Mr. and Mrs. Wright for their consent to engage in teaching. Mr. Beals had learned enough to convince him of the wisdom of Alice's plans.

Mrs. Wright, who saw the difficulties that

were likely to arise from causes which have already been brought before the reader, referred her to Mr. Wright. He had seen that things were not always "quite right" in the family, but he supposed the causes would pass away. He was sure a strong attachment existed between Alice and his daughters, and he was sure her presence added greatly to his enjoyment. When she proposed the matter, he was taken by surprise. "Have we not treated you well?" "Oh yes, I could not have been treated more kindly. I love you as I loved my father, and I love you all; but my services are not needed, and I have an opportunity of relieving you from the burden of my support."

"Your face and voice are needed here, and there is no burden about it. I love to have you here."

The feeling evinced in those plain words, "I love to have you here," caused her to throw her arms around his neck and weep.

"You must not think of going away," said

the old man, tenderly kissing her, and letting fall a tear on her cheek.

"You can not believe," said Alice, "that my object is to benefit myself, or to add to my own happiness. I am sure it is best for me to go, and I hope you will consent. Without your consent I will never go."

"That's a good girl. I will talk with mother about it, and see. There is something which I do not understand."

He did so, and was informed that certain jealousies had arisen respecting Mr. Newall, and that a short absence might be conducive to the removal of any difficulty. Thus Mr. Wright was led to give his assent. "But mind, now," said he, "I let you go just as I let one of the other girls: you are not of age; this is your home, and you are to come home as soon as school is out."

"I acknowledge your right to direct me, and shall be most happy to be allowed to consider this my home."

The arrangements for Alice's departure

were speedily made, and she left amid the unfeigned regret of every member of the family. The distance which she had to travel was about thirty miles. She took passage in the stage ; the driver was directed to leave her at the dwelling of a brother of Mr. Beals's, who would see her properly introduced to the scene of her future labors.

Newall was no frequenter of the public house of which the village boasted. The bar-room had never been the scene of any efforts to conciliate the sovereign people. This was the only charge that had been brought against him—I mean aside from the Burton reports. It was strongly suspected by some who congregated there that the pride which kept him away from the public house would seriously interfere with his success in life. On the morning of Alice's departure, however, he happened to be at the public house from which the stage set out, and at the very hour of its departure. Of course he could not avoid seeing Alice, and,

as she was the only passenger, he could scarcely avoid booking himself for a passage also. He did avoid it, however, and contented himself with asking her where and for what purpose she was going, in terms rather more direct than strict propriety would sanction. Owing to the hurry of her departure, probably she did not notice it, but gave him direct and explicit replies. There remained time only to bid her adieu. If her hand received an unnecessary pressure, perhaps it was owing to the movement of the vehicle at the moment of contact.

The ride was for the most part a solitary one, and far from pleasant. Nature, indeed, spread out her resources before her, but the lonely heart permits not the eye to measure the forms of beauty, or the ear to regale itself with melody.

Thought was busy with the past, causing tears to flow; and with the future, causing sickening anxieties.

She arrived safely at Mr. Beals's, and was

soon engaged in the labors of the calling she had assumed.

Newall returned to the office, and would fain persuade himself that he could study as at other times. But though a most inviting black-letter volume was spread out before him, containing a most veritable record of the exploits of those celebrated gentlemen, John Doe and Richard Roe, yet his thoughts would follow the stage and its lone passenger "over the hills and far awa'."

CHAPTER XVIII.

A GRAVE DISCUSSION.—A LEGAL CONSULTATION.

A GROUP was sitting in the piazza of the tavern on the day of Alice's solitary departure. The said departure furnished them with theme for remark. They had so often discussed the affairs of the nation, and settled the most profound questions in political and economical science, that a new subject was quite a wind-fall, an important matter.

There were several persons in the group with whom the reader is somewhat acquainted. Mr. Isaacs was there; wherefore was not so plain. He was not a standing member of the circle. It was suspected by some that he had a desire for office; perhaps his design was to qualify himself for the same by listening to the discussions which were often enacted there.

Mr. Jameson was there too, with his indefatigable jack-knife, and Mr. Root, having lost none of his sagacity in the discernment of motives.

"There, Mr. Isaacs," said Jameson, "there goes the girl that you were going to take, if Wright had not been a little too quick for you."

"Where is she going? Has she quitted Wright's?" said Isaacs.

"She has gone, bag and baggage," said Root. "She stayed just about as long as I expected she would."

"Rather longer than I expected," said Isaacs.

"Why so?" said Jameson. "Did they not use her well?"

"Oh yes, as well as need be; but—"

"But what?" said Jameson, paring with increased vigor on his shingle

"Why, we ought to be careful what we say about any body. I thought of taking her, it is true, but I concluded, on the whole

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that it would not do. "I believe she did pretty well till this young lawyer came along."

"Mr. Isaacs," said Jameson, "you are a rich man, and that I don't care any thing about; but you are an old man, and that I do care something about, or I would pitch you headforemost out into the street for what you have said about that girl, if I had to go to state prison for it to-morrow."

"Jameson," said Isaacs, "you have been taking more than is for your good this morning."

"I haven't tasted a drop this morning; I haven't tasted a drop since that girl watched and prayed all night by the side of my child that is dead and gone; since she"—he was about to enumerate her services, when he recollected that she had enjoined secrecy upon him—"it is no matter what she did; it is what you would not do to save all creation from eternal flames." Closing his knife with a snap which made Isaacs start, he took himself off.

“Has not Jameson been drinking?” said Isaacs to Root.

“No, I guess not; but that girl got round him when his child was sick, and he is ready to fight if any thing is said against her.”

The worthies continued their conversation and came to the conclusion that Mr. Wright was imprudent in taking the girl into his family, that young people are very apt to misbehave, and that it is in all such cases a great mark of foresight and wisdom to let things alone.

Jameson left the tavern, partly because he felt that he had gone too far, and partly through fear of going further toward a quarrel. He was walking onward with no definite purpose, when, looking up, he saw Newall sitting in the office alone. He had seen him take leave of Alice, and concluded he should find some sympathy with him in the case. “I want to know,” said he, “if there is any law against slander?”

“Certainly; but if you wish for counsel in

a particular case, call in the afternoon, when Mr. Granby will be in. I am only a student."

"I want to know if a rich man can say what he pleases about a poor girl, and no help for it?"

Newall, thinking that it was a case in which his innate feeling needed soothing, rather than any deep knowledge of the common law of slander, requested him to state the case, and perhaps he could then advise him.

Jameson then sat down, and began with the history of Alice's services to his family, her watchfulness, her depriving herself of a part of her necessary clothing for the sick one, her tears and her prayers; till the tears so obscured his vision that he did not see that Newall's eyes were as full as his own. He then attempted to give some account of what had been said at the tavern, but, as his angry feelings had been displaced by those of a milder tone, he could not make out an actionable case.

Newall thanked him for the interesting information, and assured him that Alice herself would counsel forgiveness.

“There is no doubt of that; and now, what have I been about? I have told what she begged me again and again not to tell. I did not mean—”

“Be assured it shall never be repeated, and shall never do your benefactress any harm.”

Jameson retired, and left Newall to his reflections. The communication which he had received certainly had no tendency to cause said reflections to have less reference to Alice Gordon.

CHAPTER XIX.

THE CONSULTATION.—WEATHERSBY'S INTER-
VIEW WITH NEWALL.—THE RESULT.

Mrs. APTHORP saw Miss Gordon pass in the stage, and she immediately sallied forth to make inquiries as to her destination. The amount of her information was, that she had gone to take charge of a school in Woodville. She hastened to the Burtons, and made a report of the facts collected, with such additions and surmises as she judged would be agreeable, if not useful, to her patrons.

A consultation was held by the Misses Burton, in which the question was fully argued whether matters had proceeded to such lengths between them and Newall, that negotiations might not be renewed with the prospect of an amicable termination.

Weathersby, who was now the acknowledged suitor of Miss Clarissa, was questioned as to his opinion of the effect her departure would have on Mr. Newall.

“He will either follow up the girl and marry her,” said Weathersby, “or he has seen her for the last time. I can tell you, when I have seen him, which of the two is most likely to be true.”

So saying, he stretched himself on the lounge, with the purpose of avoiding further efforts at locomotion for the afternoon. But his usual caution and shrewdness had forsaken him when he made the last remark. It created in the Misses Burton a vehement desire that he should see Newall speedily, since such important information was to result from seeing him.

Miss Burton the elder left the room, and soon returned with the interesting information that ‘Ma’ required the assistance of both her daughters, and would require it till evening. Weathersby understood the movement.

and it was by no means good policy for him to defeat it.

"I ought to spend the afternoon in the office, and I must," said he, reluctantly rising, and making for the door.

"You will call this evening?" said Miss Julia, with great sisterly affection.

Weathersby replied with a nod, and went to the office.

He found Newall, for the first time in his life, disengaged.

"Doing nothing, and looking melancholy," said he to himself.

"She is gone," said Weathersby, soberly, without further preface.

"I know it," said Newall.

"And you will be after her soon."

Newall shook his head, but without increase of cheerfulness in his visage.

"She is a charming girl," said Newall, after a silence of some continuance.

"You never made a truer statement," replied Weathersby.

"She ought to be well-educated; she would adorn any circle."

"Newall, Jenkins, and Co. might educate her, without materially diminishing their capital."

Again Newall shook his head.

"Newall, I suspect you are further gone in that matter than I supposed. I have kept (chiefly on account of the interest I feel in the girl) as close an observation of your movements as propriety would allow. Perhaps, seeing how much I already know, the safest way would be to put me under bonds to keep your counsels."

"You are mistaken. I have seen Miss Gordon but a very few times, and I never had a thought of attempting to marry her. You can not suppose me capable of trifling with her happiness?"

"No. The truth is, I did not know what to think. I did not believe you wished to marry her, and I was unwilling to believe that you wished to flirt with her, and I was

also reluctant to entertain the idea that a man of your sense did not know what he wanted, or what he was about. I now incline to this last opinion."

"What have I been doing?" he asked, in some alarm.

"Why, it strikes me that you have been doing just what was most likely to win the girl's affections."

"Do you think so?"

"I do."

"I assure you I have had no such design—not a thought of it."

"I believe you, though there are not many whom I would believe in like circumstances. I am glad she has gone, though I shall miss her sweet face."

"You didn't visit there?"

"No; I am not insane. I advised you once to let her alone, but I have thought more about it since, and I am not sure but that it is the best thing you can do, provided Newall, Jenkins, and Co. consent. You don't

want money ; you can't find a more beautiful or lovely girl ; one who would love you more tenderly, or be prouder of your intellectual exploits."

Newall made no reply, but his countenance expressed no very decided repugnance to Weathersby's advice. Weathersby deemed it wise to leave him alone to digest the advice already given : he accordingly returned to Burton's, well knowing that the ladies would be disengaged as soon as he was prepared to report on the relations of Mr. Newall to Alice Gordon. In that report he did not deem it necessary to give his opinions as to coming events, but confined himself to the solemn asseveration of Newall that he had never entertained for a moment the thought of addressing Alice, and his own indorsement of the sincerity of the asseveration.

This was a great relief to Miss Burton the elder. Not securing a prize one's self, it is comfortable to know that a neighbor has not secured it.

After Weathersby's departure, Newall's reflections were of a more deeply introspective character. Was it true that he felt a deeper interest in Alice than he had supposed? Had he unconsciously exhibited toward her a manner of treatment having a tendency to awaken in her pure bosom feelings that might disturb her peace? His mind became anxious and restless. A walk, perhaps, would calm it. He chose, on account of its shade and retirement, the road in which he met Alice on her return from her call at Mr. Beals's. Nature, since then, had changed for the worse. An air of loneliness seemed to pervade the scene, and a heart-sinking, which he was utterly unable to explain, seized him, when he came to the spot where he had parted with Alice, on the evening above alluded to. Local associations brought up, with almost the distinctness of vision, the transparent countenance and melting eye.

He returned to the office little benefited by his walk. During the evening, "The

Law of Evidence" lay invitingly open before him, but received no part of his attention. When he retired for the night, thought was busy, and kept slumber far away. At length a definite question was before him: Should he banish Alice from his thoughts? The earnest wishes of his father to see his son distinguished in the intellectual world were considered, his own high aspirations were remembered, and at length he closed his eyes with the full purpose that the morning light should find all his energies devoted to those studies which should qualify and enable him to stand among the mighty in the courts of justice or the halls of legislation.

CHAPTER XX.

NEWALL'S JOURNEY TO WOODFORD. — ITS RESULT.

MORNING came. Newall opened his casement and looked out on the scenery. It had not recovered its hues of beauty in consequence of the resolution he had formed. He entered with vigor upon his task. His intellect did not fail to obey the biddings of his will. Still, at intervals, the thought of Alice would steal an entrance ; and once, when he had transposed his gaze from the page to the ceiling, that he might consider the soundness of a point advanced by the author he was reading, he found himself forming a mental picture of the school-house, with its school-mistress dispensing smiles potent to allure the most indolent to effort. These were involuntary and casual wanderings. His pur-

pose was fixed, and remained so—for two days. On the third day a new thought presented itself with great force. It was possible that Miss Gordon had put the construction on his attention hinted at by Weathersby. Did not justice require that he should remove that impression? He thought of her lone condition—her heart and peace of mind her only fortune: to a shipwreck of these he would not be accessory. Would a letter do? No; a matter of such delicacy and importance could be managed only by the living voice. He must see Alice; he must learn if any false impression had been made, and remove it ere it was too late. A visit must be made in person. Thus far was clear. How the subject was to be approached, how discussed and settled, it did not occur to him to inquire.

The next morning saw him seated in the same stage that had carried Alice. The country was, as we have before remarked, beautiful, but it was no part of Newall's ob-

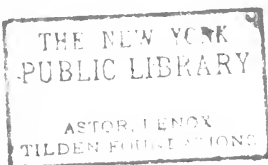
ject to admire the scenery: a high moral and benevolent purpose absorbed his thoughts.

He stopped at the public house in the small village of Woodville. He learned that the school-house in which Miss Gordon taught was a mile distant. As the sun was still high in the heavens, he could reach the school-house before the school was dismissed. He walked in that direction. The school-house was situated on the further side of a grove of thick pines. He stood on the edge of the grove, waiting for the dismissal of the school. At length he became impatient, and drew near the building. A movement was heard within, and he expected to see the children rushing from the door. But a deep silence prevailed for a moment, and then the clear, sweet tones of Alice's voice was heard in prayer. The desires expressed were so pure, and simple, and earnest, evincing such benevolent regard for the pupils, such confident views of God as her Father and heaven as her home, that the tears coursed down his

cheeks as he listened, and he longed to throw himself on his knees by her side.

The prayer closed, and the school was dismissed. Not wishing to be seen weeping, he moved a few paces among the thick pines till the children had taken their departure. Then, with a faltering step, a quick-beating heart, and a still moistened eye, he came to the door. It was open. Alice was alone. She sat leaning forward, with her forehead resting on her hand, which was supported by her desk. A slight tap on the door-case caused her to start. A tear was in her eye. A smile of welcome illumined her countenance as she saw him; it was quickly followed by the deepest crimson. She rose to meet him. He advanced to take her hand, but his arm encircled and pressed her unresistingly to his heart, while a kiss, long and burning, was imprinted on her cheek. In a moment she gently disengaged herself, and, sitting down, poured forth copious tears. Were they tears of bitterness?





After this expression of reciprocal feeling, it was a work of some difficulty for them to assume a position suitable for conversation. The Rubicon had been passed. Both felt this to be so as distinctly as if a formal offer had been made and accepted. Neither regretted that it was so, yet few words were spoken, while for an hour they wandered in that grove.

Alice enjoined it upon Newall to consult his father, Mr. Wright, and her pastor. The approbation of these must be secured before what had passed should be considered binding. She also requested him to consult his own calm judgment, and if he then desired it, to consider himself as free. The sad, reproachful expression that gathered on his countenance as this last remark was made by her, was chased away by the smile that followed its utterance.

Early in the morning he set out on his return, and was astonished that he had not noticed the beauty of the scenery on the former day.

Newall immediately called on Mr. and Mrs. Wright. He made a simple and accurate statement of the whole matter, and besought their approbation.

"I am sorry to lose her," said Mr. Wright; "but, from what I can learn of you, I don't know a man into whose hands I would sooner let her go. There is only one thing that troubles me."

"What is that?"

"Why, I am afraid you are not a religious man—you don't profess to be?"

"I do not, though I have for religion the utmost veneration. That one who is not strictly a religious man can be a good husband, is proved by a near example. Mr. Wright, I believe, is not a professor of religion?"

"No, I am not, and I have felt the need of it as a husband and father, as well as a man. It must be a great hinderance to Alice if she marries one who is not going with her. My wife has known what it means to be hindered."

She had known it, but was to know it no more; for Mr. Wright had now set up the family altar, and had been proposed for admission to the Church.

"You have our consent," said Mr. Wright; "only prove worthy of her."

Newall next went to the pastor. To present the matter to him he feared would be more embarrassing. After the usual salutations and a somewhat embarrassing silence, Newall observed,

"I saw your brother yesterday."

"Were you at Woodville?" said Mr. Beals, earnestly.

"Yes, sir," replied Newall, blushing very deeply.

Mr. Beals kept silence for a moment, as if wrapped in thought.

"It can not be possible that you would deceive or injure that orphan?"

"No sooner than I would take my own life," said he, with deep emotion.

"You are engaged to her?"

“When I have my father’s approbation and her pastor’s.”

“And Mr. Wright?”

“He has been consulted.”

“You have my approbation, my cordial approbation, with but one misgiving.”

Newall, by his looks, requested an explanation.

“Alice,” said the pastor, “has never, since her birth, passed a day in a house in which the morning and evening prayer did not ascend.”

Newall dropped his head. He was almost prepared to say that her own house should be a house of prayer, but he knew something of his own heart, and dared not.

The engagements of Mr. Beals rendered a speedy close to the interview necessary. He took Newall cordially by the hand as he retired, and invited him to communicate with him freely in relation to all matters affecting the interests of Alice.

CHAPTER XXI.

AN INTERESTING INTERVIEW.

NEWALL returned to his office. "The Law of Evidence" lay open upon his table, but it did not receive a look. Weathersby soon entered. He had been dispatched by the Burtons to learn the facts connected with Newall's disappearance. That he had been to Woodville had already been learned from the driver.

"I have come," said he, "to catechize you, and if there is any thing connected with your late mysterious disappearance which you do not wish to have made public, you will just keep uncommonly close, for I am only half myself, as I was married last evening. If you have any public news, I am most anxious to hear."

"I have been to Woodville."

“The driver told that. The results of the visit?”

“They have not transpired.”

“And you altogether decline making them known at present?”

“Yes.”

“Very well. I must, then, learn from somebody else that you found out you were in love with a girl without money?”

“You must.”

“And furthermore, that you went to inform her of said discovery, and that the information did not cause any severe distress? This I must learn from somebody else?”

“You must.”

“Then I am heartily glad that it is so. You will not desert her, I am sure, let what will happen. I have told you one important fact, that I am married, and now let me tell you a still more important one: Miss Clarissa Burton that was, Mrs. Weathersby that is, has \$5000 instead of \$2000, left her by her grand-mother of blessed memory, and this

comes, without encumbrance, into her husband's hands. Besides, I have been at work to-day assisting my honored father-in-law to overhaul his bonds, mortgages, deeds, &c., and I find they are more numerous than I supposed; but, really, I did not suppose the old gentleman was such a—was so deficient in moral discrimination. But I shall be anxious to know how certain events will be viewed in New York."

"You shall know soon, for I leave for the city to-morrow."

"You will write me?"

"Yes, if I do not return immediately."

A warm pressure of the hands was exchanged as they were about to separate.

Weathersby, seeing what he thought to be a compassionate rather than a congratulatory expression in Newall's countenance, said,

"Now, Newall, don't condole with me; I don't ask you, with your principles, to congratulate me; but, really, Mrs. Weathersby is

good-tempered and attached to her husband, and under his influence instead of that of her sister, will be free from certain faults that interfered somewhat with your admiration of her. And, again, besides the advantages above named, my connection with the family, viewed as a means of usefulness, is no small matter."

"How so?"

"Why, Mr. Burton, as I have hinted, is somewhat deficient in moral discrimination, or what some would call common honesty, and he is somewhat deficient in a knowledge of the law. To be short, there was a mortgage which he designed to foreclose which would have ruined a worthy family. My superior knowledge of the law, the result of my industrious habits, enabled me to convince the old gentleman that to proceed to the extremities proposed would by no means be expedient. I even hinted that among the possible consequences might be his being accommodated with board, lodging, and em-

ployment in one of our public institutions. The consequence is, that the matter is left wholly to my discretion, and I shall see that the family does not suffer. Similar cases will doubtless occur, so that in this point of view my marriage is to be regarded as a very benevolent act."

Newall gave him a still warmer shake of the hand, and Weathersby returned to make such a report to his wife and sister as he saw best adapted to their good and that of the neighborhood.

Newall sat down to write to Alice, to communicate to her the views of Mr. Wright and of Mr. Beals, and to say many other things true and interesting to her, and which possibly might be so to the reader. After having sealed the letter, he opened it to add on the margin a postscript, informing her of the marriage of Weathersby, and to assure her of Weathersby's deep interest in her welfare.

This was the first letter that Alice had ever received. She had never before been

beyond the limits of her native township, and her father, while living, had never left her long enough to render a letter necessary.

It was handed her as she returned from her school at evening. She did not open it till she retired to her chamber with the certainty of remaining undisturbed. Did this indicate a lack of feeling?

The letter was timely for Alice. Since his departure she had felt a strange feeling of depression, unlike any thing she had felt before. It was not regret for what had passed; it was not distrust in him who had the keeping of her heart. It was a sadness, in the midst of her joy, which it required all her strength of principle and energy of character to withstand.

CHAPTER XXII.

NEWALL'S VISIT TO HIS FATHER.—THE RESULT
OF IT.

THE next morning Newall set out for the city to see his honored father, and to secure his consent to the connection which he had formed with the portionless orphan. He felt some solicitude as to the result. He had, however, firmly made up his mind never to abandon Alice. If consent was withheld, he would wait till he became of age, and if his patrimony were withheld, he would rely upon his own energy.

Mr. Newall, senior, had, by enterprise and industry, amassed a large fortune. He did not desire greatly to increase it. He had but one son: his most earnest wish was to see him distinguished in professional life: one half his fortune would have been freely sac-

rificed, if need be, to secure that end. This end he had kept steadily in view from the son's infancy. In the choice of means, he was more judicious than most in his situation who cherish similar desires. He did not choose the most expensive schools, though money would have been poured out like water to secure his son's intellectual progress.

He relied mainly for success in awakening and cherishing in the mind of his son the desire for improvement and distinction. In this he was successful. A deep ambition was nurtured, and grew strong within him, which led him to welcome labor, and caused his voluntary retirement into the country, that his elementary professional studies might be pursued without the interruption inseparable from the city, and his membership in the family of a wealthy merchant.

The evening after his arrival, before he had made known to his father the object of his visit, an incident occurred which exerted no inconsiderable influence on his applica-

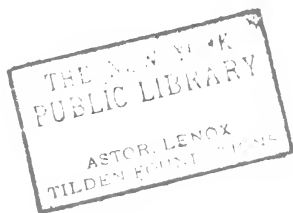
tion. Several gentlemen were sitting in his father's parlor, one of high reputation as a man of intellect, and learned in the law. A question connected with a disputed point of law of great practical importance, and in regard to which the authorities were reconcile and somewhat conflicting, arose, and was referred to the gentleman above mentioned for his decision. He confessed that he had not fully examined the question, and out of civility, or a desire to address a remark to the son of his host, he asked him if he had happened to look at the point in question. Truth required him to reply in the affirmative.

It was Newall's habit, when a question of importance came before his mind, to trace it to its principles, and settle it, if possible. This often led him far away from the course prescribed to the student in his elementary course, but it was Newall's way. The point in question had come up before him, and the library to which he had access enabled him to consult all the authorities, and his own

discrimination enabled him to detect the fact that the conflict was only an apparent one. In accordance with the gentleman's request, he stated the results of his investigation with great clearness and precision. The gentleman remarked, "That argument, if it had been made in court last week, would have reversed the decision in a very important case. If your time permit, I shall be glad to see you in my office." This compliment more than repaid Newall's father for all the care, anxiety, and expense he had been at in the education of his son : it prepared him to say yes to whatever that son might request.

When the company had withdrawn, Newall made known the object of his coming to the city. He gave a glowing description of the personal, intellectual, and social qualities of Alice, and a frank exposé of the relation in which they stood toward each other. The father listened without evincing any approbation or disapprobation, and when his son had paused, calmly asked,





“And what are your present plans?”

“My father’s approbation; then, that Alice be furnished with the means of education, while I pursue my studies under the additional stimulus of the desire of gaining a reputation of which such a woman would be proud.”

Newall had struck the right chord in his father’s breast.

“My son,” said he, proudly, “could not select one that would do discredit to his father’s house. I consent, with the understanding that nothing shall be allowed to interfere with those studies, so necessary to your success. I judge you have not been idle. Make such arrangements as you please, but do not let it occupy your time. You can draw on me for the necessary funds.”

“My dear father, if any motive were wanting to make me exert myself to the utmost, it would be found in this renewed exhibition of your goodness to me.”

“When do you propose to return?”

“To-morrow morning, sir.”

“Perhaps you had better call on Mr. N before you go.”

“I had rather call on him two years hence,” said he, proudly.

“Very well,” said the delighted parent.

They retired for the night, and early in the morning Newall went on his way to Woodville.

CHAPTER XXIV.

THE SCHOOL DISCONTINUED.—ALICE'S EDUCATION INTERRUPTED.—HER MARRIAGE.

NEWALL hastened to make known to Alice the full consent of his father to all his plans, and expected to receive at once her active co-operation in the execution of the same. In his view, the school was to be immediately relinquished, and Alice to pursue her studies under auspices the most favorable that money could secure. He found his eager wishes affectionately yet firmly resisted. Her school could not be relinquished till the time of her engagement had expired, and no considerations would induce her to be a pensioner on his father's bounty.

Pecuniary matters had received so small a share of Newall's attention, they had always, in his mind, held a place so greatly

subordinate to the intellectual, that the idea of an objection on the part of Alice to his proposed arrangement did not occur to him. A little reasoning, delivered in the tones of her voice, convinced him that she was right, and increased his admiration of her character. She bade him prepare himself for the high destinies which she believed awaited him. She entreated him, with a deeper tenderness than he had before seen her indicate, to build with reference to eternity. The similarity in the weighty truths urged upon his attention brought vividly to mind his first conversation with Mr. Beals, in which it was made plain to his intellect and conscience that he was building his edifice in defiance of the laws planned by Omniscience.

He trembled as he thought that this fabric of his affection, dearer to him than any other, was erected in the same disregard, on his part, of the eternal principles of law. He found consolation in the thought that Alice was the devout votary of duty, and from that

hour resolved that no wish of his should be allowed to interfere with what she believed to be obligatory upon her.

During the progress of her school, Alice availed herself of his advice and assistance in regard to books, and bent her ardent mind, with its full energy, to the acquirement of useful knowledge. Her letters were written with a force that showed to Newall that she was possessed of a mind not inferior to his own. At the close of her school in Woodville, she wrote to acquaint Newall that she had taken a more lucrative school in an adjoining township, and to inform him that at its close she should repair to such a school as he should recommend. Such was his confidence in her judgment, that her acts could not but meet his approbation.

At the end of her engagement she repaired to a school of the highest reputation, and for the first time felt the ecstasy of having the means of improvement furnished, and nothing to interfere with the freest use of them.

Newall was delighted and astonished at her progress.

She was thus prosperously pursuing her way, when the news of sickness in the family of Mr. Wright caused her to change her plans. Mr. and Mrs. Wright and Eliza were taken with a malignant fever. A letter was written to Alice, but no request was made, and no expectation entertained that she would visit them.

Her answer was made in person. She left her studies, and came to act as nurse in the family that received and cherished her when desolate and destitute. Had an angel of mercy visited the afflicted family, the effect could scarcely have been more beneficial. Mr. Wright, whose life had been despaired of, began to recover from the moment that her voice fell on his ear. The entire control of the family passed, as a matter of course into her hands, and for three long months she performed services which gold could not buy.

At first, Newall was disposed to complain that she had left her studies and exposed her health. In a few words she described her condition when her father was laid in the grave, and the knock of the kind old man was heard at her door—the kindness with which she had been treated, noticing the fact that it was through the same means that she had met him, and had in prospect with him a happiness she had never known before. Newall needed not her concluding remark to cause him to withdraw his remonstrance, “And now would you wish to have an ungrateful wife?”

“No, and I shall never question what you do again.”

“Believe me, we are receiving the best possible education when Providence appoints the school.”

Health was at length restored to the family, and Alice resumed her studies, soon to be broken off again. Newall had been admitted to the bar, and was received at once into a

practice which enabled him to exert his talents and acquirements to the best advantage. Mr. N. offered him a partnership, which was without hesitation accepted. A house was provided and furnished by his father, and nothing was wanted but the union of those for whom it was provided.

The ceremony was performed at Mr. Wright's. The plain farm-house, the friends who had stood by her in her need, must be the scene of her happiness on this occasion. Newall's father was present, and for the first time beheld his daughter. A single glance at her graceful form, and a moment's listening to the choice, yet unaffected language that flowed from her lips, removed all doubts as to her fitness to shine in the circles in which she seemed destined to move.

"There is something," said one of the numerous guests who thronged the farm-house on the occasion, "there is something in this lending unto the Lord, after all."

"What do you mean?" said his neighbor.

“Why, the Book says, ‘He that giveth to the poor lendeth to the Lord, and He will repay.’ I always thought Mr. Gordon unwise in not laying up his money for his daughter, instead of giving it away as he did, but I guess he had the right of it. Here is his daughter, who has been taken good care of ever since his death, and now is married to about the most likely man that has been seen in these parts.”

“You think, then,” said Mr. Beals, who came up in time to hear the remark, “that Mr. Gordon was not mistaken when he rested on the promise, ‘Leave your fatherless children with me?’ ”

“I don’t think he was,” said the former, solemnly.

Jameson was among the guests invited, at the suggestion of Newall. He kept in the entry and in the door, till Newall told him to congratulate the bride. It was not done in very courtly style, but it drew tears even from the fastidious merchant. Jameson took

her hand with visible hesitation, while a tear made a sally from eyes evidently unused to weep.

“I always knew it would turn out in some such way with you, ever since you pulled off—”

“Hush!” said Alice, putting her hand to his mouth.

Jameson retired with precipitation, for fear, as he afterward said, if he stayed longer, he should “blubber like a child.”

Having bid her father, and mother, and sisters (she never failed to call them by those names) an affectionate farewell, she set out for the city, and took possession of her costly mansion.

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CHAPTER XXV.

THE FAMILY ALTAR.

OUR narrative hastens to its close. Mr. and Mrs. Newall reached the city in the evening, and found their dwelling and household ready for their reception. When the hour for retiring approached, the young bride was manifestly uneasy. She watched with intense interest the movements of her husband as he rang the bell and directed the servants to assemble in the room in which they were sitting. Still, she was uncertain as to his purpose. He took the Bible, her father's Bible, and read a chapter, and, reverently closing the volume, said, "Let us pray." Sweeter sounds than those never fell on the ears of Alice. He offered a prayer at a throne of grace, and the household slept under the protection of Him who had

led the orphan in a way that she knew not of. The family altar thus erected was never thrown down, nor was the fire kindled suffered to languish.

As the time drew near in which Newall was to assume the responsible duties of the master of a household, the serious reflections to which he had been no stranger since his first interview with Mr. Beals gathered strength. The daily duty-life of Alice, perhaps, had made more impression on his mind than any thing else.

The thought of bringing her under a roof where prayer was not heard was painful. He was led to a more solemn consideration of his relations to God than before, to a firm conviction that his principles of action must be radically changed. But his views were indistinct, and he longed for the teaching of her who, having done His will, in accordance with the promise, knew the divine doctrine of a happy life. He was led so far, however, that he resolved to institute family worship.

fully believing that Alice would sustain it if he should feel constrained to abandon the attempt.

The act itself removed many of the difficulties out of the way, and the free conversation to which it led with Alice caused him, ere long, to cherish a hope that he had been renewed by the Spirit.

The great fear, and one which had had a marked influence in keeping the subject of religion at a distance, was not realized. He did not find that religion cramped his energies or chilled the ardent pursuit of excellence. On the contrary, he found that it opened to view a far wider field for effort than he had conceived before. Viewing himself as laboring together with God, knowing that his labor was not in vain in the Lord, seeking the honor that cometh from God, he found in these a stimulus for exertion which earthly ambition could not furnish.

In due time he was called to act as a leg-

islator. Among the many projects of usefulness which he entered upon and accomplished, there was one in which he felt a peculiar interest: it was an institution for the fatherless.

By his eloquence and influence he had roused the attention of his fellow-citizens, and application was made to the Legislature for the necessary powers and aid. The task of advocacy was consigned to Newall. His eloquence and weight of character were successful; a bill was passed making munificent provision for the orphan.

As he came home with his cheek flushed with the joy of benevolent success, his wife placed her arms around him, and uttered, in her sweetest manner, "DO YOU KNOW WHY I WAS LEFT AN ORPHAN?"

THE END.

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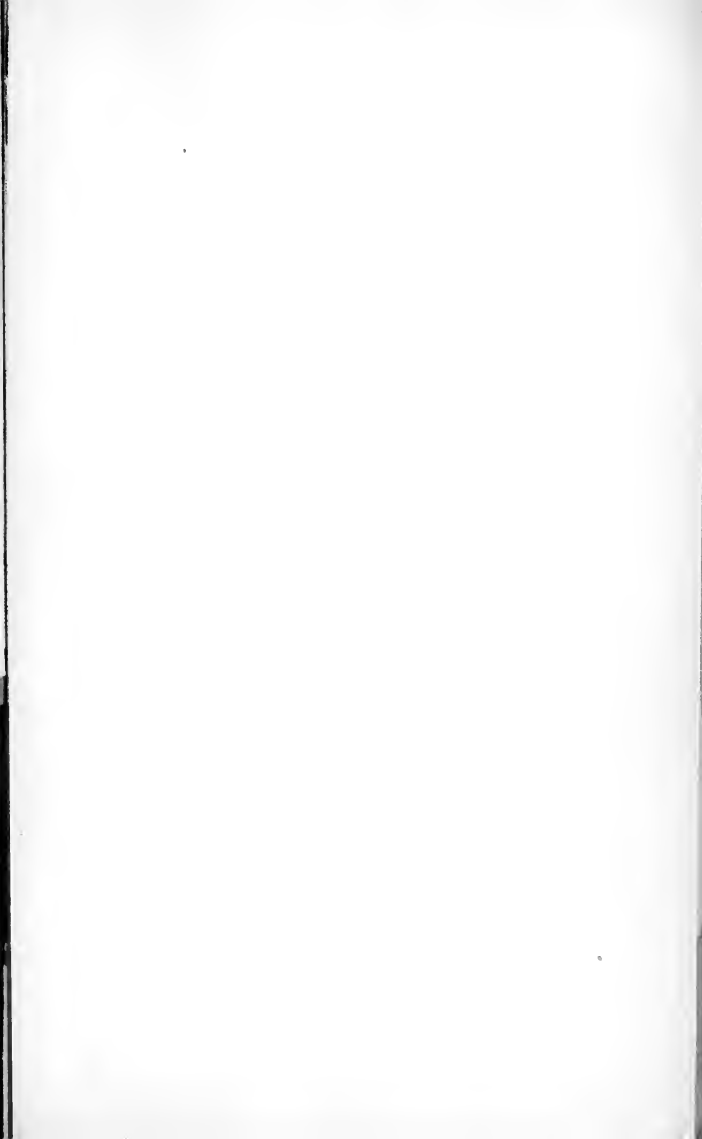
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